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JUDAISM

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND ZIONISM— THE WARTIME RECORD

Selig Adler

A CRUEL GOD OR NONE—IS THERE NO OTHER CHOICE?

Robert Gordis

JUDAISM IN A TIME OF CRISIS—FOUR RESPONSES

Jacob Neusner

SHAPERS OF MODERN THOUGHT:

HERMAN COHEN — Seymour Feldman

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG — Trude Weiss-Rosmarin

GERSHOM SCHOLEM — Jacob B. Agus

ISSUE No. 83 / VOLUME 21 / NUMBER 3 / \$2.25

SUMMER 1972

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

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JUDAISM, conceived as a free and non-partisan organ, is dedicated to the creative discussion and exposition of the religious, moral and philosophical concepts of Judaism and their relevance to the problems of modern society. Through an exploration of the meaning and needs of the Jewish experience, it hopes to widen the channels of communication between Jews and to affirm Jewish verity and vitality to the world at large.

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American Jewish Congress

JUDAISM: A QUARTERLY JOURNAL is published by the American Jewish Congress. It appears in January, April, July, and October. Office of Publication: 15 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. Re-entered as second-class matter at Post Office, New York City, N.Y. Subscription in the United States and Canada, \$8.00 for one year, \$14.00 for two years, \$19.00 for three years; foreign subscription, \$9.00. Special rate for bulk (10 or more) and student subscriptions, \$5.00. Single issue, \$2.25; single issue abroad, \$2.50. Make checks payable to the order of JUDAISM, and send to: 15 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. A month's notice must be given of any change of address.

The Board of Editors invites articles, communications, comments and discussion for publication. Address: Editors, JUDAISM, 15 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. Copyright © 1972 by the American Jewish Congress.

JUDAISM

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In increasing measure, modern men are turning again to the quest for a world-view on the issues that are timeless—the meaning of life, the challenge of death, the purpose of suffering, the significance of the individual, his relation to society, and the goal of history. In order to advance this enterprise of spiritual discovery of our time this Journal has been projected. It will be primarily concerned with the philosophy, ethics, and religion of Judaism as a factor in the contemporary world . . .

We are committed to the proposition that Judaism has positive value today for Jews and for the world . . . At the same time, we disassociate ourselves from the dangerous tendency toward the hardening of party lines on the contemporary Jewish scene . . . The members of the Board of Editors belong to every school of Jewish life or to none. The trends popularly referred to as Orthodox, Conservatism, Reform, Reconstructionism, as well as others that as yet have no specific names, have their advocates among us, though no institution or movement is officially represented . . . Undoubtedly, our differences will find expression in these pages, but we shall be at one in opposing the dogmatism which takes for granted that one's own particular standpoint has a monopoly on truth and the authoritarianism which would suppress any contrary point of view.

Judaism will be dedicated to the quest for truth in the spirit of freedom. Our columns will be open to anyone who has something significant to say and the ability to say it well. New and unconventional interpretations, whatever their standpoint, will be welcomed from every source, for we share the conviction of the Talmud that "Both these and the others are the words of the living God."—*From the introductory article by Robert Gordis, "Toward a Renaissance of Judaism" in Vol. I, No. 1.*

IN MEMORIAM

In one day in May, the Jewish people sustained two heavy blows in the passing of Maurice Samuel and Judd L. Teller, the first a life-long member of the Board of Contributing Editors of JUDAISM, the second a valued contributor whose latest article, "The Jewish Experiment with Liberalism," appeared in our Winter 1972 issue. To attempt to assess their contributions to Jewish life and thought and, by that token, the extent of our loss is impossible.

Maurice Samuel was, unquestionably, the most distinguished man of letters in the field of Anglo-Jewish literature in our time. His superb literary and forensic gifts, his wit, his insight and his whole-hearted dedication to the Jewish cultural and ethical tradition made him the greatest interpreter of East-European Jewish life for Western Jews. This function has become increasingly important as ever larger numbers of young people are seeking to discover the roots of their being. His love of Jewish tradition and the Jewish people was free from the sentimentality that characterizes so much of contemporary Jewish writing. He loved his people, though he understood them, and through his understanding grew in his love. He has left a precious literary legacy behind him, over and beyond the memory of his vital and dynamic personality.

Judd L. Teller was outstanding in our generation for his extraordinary integrity, both intellectual and moral. His broad-based knowledge of all facets of contemporary Jewish life, his incisive intelligence and his dedication to humane values, made him an exemplar of the Jewish human being at his best, in whom idealism and realism were superbly united. The memory of his gentle personality will long endure in the hearts of all who knew him, and his books and other writings will continue to be a source of enlightenment and understanding for the age.

Yehi zikhram barukh!

ROBERT GORDIS

The First Reader

IN ONE OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES, THE famous detective turns to his colleague, Dr. Watson, and says to him, "I want you to notice, Watson, what the dog did last night." "Why," answers Watson, "the dog did nothing." "That's what I want you to notice." This comic interchange is an epitome of the tragic reaction by the free world—or the lack of it—to the Nazi Holocaust and to the existence of the State of Israel by the councils of nations.

This truth has not been easy to swallow. During his lifetime and for years thereafter, Franklin D. Roosevelt was the object of a profound affection bordering on worship by American Jews. Within the last decade, however, documents have come to light revealing the do-nothing policy practiced by both the American and the British governments in the face of clear-cut evidence of the Nazi campaign of extermination waged against European Jewry. On a par with this silence and inaction has been the revelation of the "ambiguous" policy of Franklin D. Roosevelt with regard to the Jewish national home in Palestine. While publicly proclaiming his adherence to this ideal, he and other officials gave private assurances to Arab potentates and other opponents of Zionism that nothing would be done "to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine."

The distinguished American historian, *Dr. Selig Adler*, who has made American foreign policy in the Middle East a specialty, presents a thorough, balanced and unimpassioned survey and analysis of the policy of the Roosevelt administration vis-à-vis the Jewish national home during the wartime years, 1941–1945. His objective and carefully researched paper, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and Zionism—The Wartime Record," may well prove to be the definitive study of this painful but fundamental chapter in American and Jewish history.

The Nazi Holocaust continues to dominate much of contemporary Jewish theology and literature. The pages of JUDAISM have contained various approaches to the agonizing problem of God's presence in a world of monstrous evil. It is undoubtedly true that most of the articulate Jewish voices—certainly those that have attracted the most attention—have been those that have questioned or denied the traditional faith in the God of history enunciated by the Biblical prophets. In some quarters, even more sensational positions have been presented, insisting that faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is now impossible for modern man and proposing various substitutes in His stead.

In "A Cruel God or None—Is There No Other Choice?" the Editor argues that these proponents of doubt or denial, whose sincerity is not being questioned, are, nevertheless, guilty of a simplistic approach to the incredible richness of the Jewish tradition and have failed to comprehend and do justice to the Biblical faith in its full depth and meaning.

In the halcyon days before Hitler, one frequently encountered the phrase, "the German-Jewish symbiosis," indicating that Jews living in the German Culture Sphere had succeeded in effecting a synthesis that would enrich both German and Jewish life. The bloody irruption of Nazism revealed how weak and impermanent were these structures erected by German-Jewish intellectuals, particularly during the period of the Weimar republic. Nonetheless, during its heyday, there were some highly attractive examples of men who, in varying proportions, succeeded in blending their Jewish heritage and their German loyalties. The most colorful of these was the statesman, Walther Rathenau. His assassination, years before the rise of Hitler, was a bloody herald of the greater catastrophe to come. In "Walther Rathenau as Jew: Irony and Tragedy," *Dr. Lothar Kahn* presents a portrait of the martyred statesman.

While nearly every month in the Hebrew calendar is distinguished by an important festival, the month of Iyyar, which follows upon Nisan, the month of Passover, has been largely "uneventful," except for the minor Feast of Lag B'Omer. The soul-searing, stirring events that have taken place in Jewish history during our century have drastically changed the situation. No less than three new festivals have emerged in Jewish consciousness, *Yom Hashoah*, "Holocaust Day," which comes near the beginning of Iyyar on the 27th of Nisan, *Yom HaAzmaut*, "Independence Day," which falls on the 5th day of Iyyar, and *Yom Yerushalayim*, "Jerusalem Liberation Day," which is observed on the 28th of Iyyar.

In his suggestive paper, "On Iyyar's Holidays," *Joel B. Wolowelsky* assesses the religious significance of these three new occasions in the Jewish calendar and the organic relationship among them. Incidentally, the paper suggests the ongoing vitality of the Jewish tradition. He proposes that this entire period be given a special name, like other extended periods in the Jewish calendar, though he has thus far been unable to come up with a sufficiently attractive one. We would hazard two suggestions. One is *Hodesh Hatehiyyah*, "the Season of Rebirth." The other possibility is to borrow the old name of a Hebrew month in the Biblical calendar. 1 Kings (8:2) refers to a month as *Ha'etanim*. The noun is used frequently in Biblical Hebrew in the sense of "permanent,

enduring, imperishable" (Jeremiah 5:15; Micah 6:2; Job 12:10). The same term, *Hodesh Ha'etanim*, would be a highly appropriate one for the martyrs being commemorated on Holocaust Day and for the heroes being honored on Israel Independence Day or Jerusalem Liberation Day.

The exaltation of reason in religion, of which Maimonides is the most influential exponent, was carried further, though in divergent paths, by Spinoza and Ahad Ha-Am. In his paper, "Maimonides, Spinoza and Ahad Ha-Am," *Dr. Alfred Gottschalk* analyzes Spinoza's reactions, both positive and negative, to Maimonides, and Ahad Ha-Am's reaction to both of his great and divergent predecessors.

In addition to his major works, such as his *Philosophic-Mystical Commentary on the Prayer Book*, the great *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook* was the author of smaller papers in which his unique ethical and mystical vision of the world came to expression.

Often little more than aperçus in extent, they reveal facets of his thought that shed light on the inner spirit of Judaism. We are pleased to publish a brief essay, "The Sage is More Important Than the Prophet," translated by Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser.

While it is probably untrue that "history repeats itself," there is a constant in human nature that creates similar reactions to similar events. This is particularly characteristic of Jewish history, which reveals a rhythm, of which the rabbis of the Talmud were conscious, and which has impressed philosophers of history from the days of Nachman Krochmal to our own day. Nineteen hundred years ago, the destruction of the Second Temple was a major disaster in Jewish experience. Given the differences in outlook and in temperament characteristic of Jews everywhere, the reaction to the catastrophe was highly varied and even contradictory.

In his paper, "Judaism in a Time of Crisis: Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple," *Professor Jacob Neusner* analyzes the reaction of the apocalyptists, the Dead Sea Sectarians at Qumran, the Judeo-Christian Sect out of which Christianity arose and the Pharisees. He finds that these varying responses are of more than historical interest and draws some conclusions for our age, which is faced by the necessity of reconstructing a firm and viable basis for Jewish life in a new and uncharted era.

Meaningful prayer has always had to tread a narrow ridge between the spontaneous undisciplined outpouring of the heart, on the one hand, and the well-structured formalism of an accepted liturgy on the other. The Rabbis, to whom we owe the basic structure of the Jewish prayer book, were acutely aware of the peril of the mechanical recitation of fixed prayers. While they elaborated the *matbea hatefillot*, "the precise form of the prayers," and ordained in great detail the laws regulating their recitations, they emphasized the importance of *kavvanah*, "inwardness and intent." They constantly urged the worshipper to be on guard against making his prayer *keva*, a fixed routine. Some of the dimensions of the basic dilemma confronting prayer are explored by *Rabbi Steven Riskin* in his paper, "Structure and Spontaneity in Prayer."

The unique characteristics of the Israeli Kibbutz continue to evoke wide-spread interest on many counts. *Dr. Martin Slann*, of Clemson University, calls attention to the unexpected points of similarity between some of the views of Leo Tolstoy and those of the early kibbutzniks. In his interesting paper, "Tolstoy and the Beginnings of Kibbutz Ideology," he shows how the strivings toward a socialised existence were shared by the Russian aristocrat and Jewish idealists.

One of the great stumbling blocks to faith which has emerged, primarily in modern times, has been the phenomenon of miracles that interfere with, or contravene, the laws of nature. Modern faith has been able to rescue the concept of the miraculous, in part, by underscoring the wonders of nature, both in the life of man and in the world about him. The other aspect of miracle, the intervention of God into the universe, has offered greater difficulties to the religious believer. In his paper, "A Post-Modern Sense of the Miraculous," *Rabbi Jordan S. Ofseyer* suggests that modern science itself, in some of its pre-suppositions and conclusions, offers a basis for reviving the belief in the reality of miracle in its traditional sense as well.

Interpreters of Judaism have always stressed the emphasis in the tradition upon unity in its conception of God, the world and man. In his brief paper, "Genesis 1:4," *Dr. Morris Stockhammer*, who won his spurs as a student of Kant and modern philosophy in relationship to Judaism, adopts a refreshingly novel position. He argues that the opening chapter of Genesis emphasizes dualism in the world and maintains that this

view is significant for our understanding of reality. We deeply regret that the author died, shortly after submitting the paper to JUDAISM. *Yehi zikhro barukh*.

In the striking paper called, simply, "Jewishness" *Harris H. Hirschberg* draws a clear distinction between "Judaism" and "Yiddishkeit." By the latter term he means the heritage of psychological and cultural values created by Eastern Jewry as a consequence of their sojourn in German-speaking lands during the Middle Ages. The warmth, the color and the intensity of Jewish life in Eastern Europe he attributes to this quality. Indirectly, the author is arguing the position, which is increasingly popular in many quarters today, that "Jewish ethnicity" is the best instrument available to us today for the survival of Judaism.

The present issue of JUDAISM deals with three major figures in modern Jewish thought. Because of their importance, books from their pens which have recently appeared in new guise have been utilized as the basis for analyses in depth of their thought and its significance for our day.

In review-essays, *Dr. Seymour Feldman* discusses Hermann Cohen, selections from whose work are printed in "Reason and Hope," *Dr. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin* assesses the importance of Franz Rosenzweig, whose "The Star of Redemption" has just appeared in an English as well as in a Hebrew version, while *Rabbi Jacob B. Agus* offers a summary and analysis of the volume of collected essays by Gershom Scholem entitled, "The Messianic Idea in Israel."

R. G.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt and Zionism— The Wartime Record**

SELIG ADLER

AS THE EUROPEAN PHASE OF WORLD WAR II neared its end, the American Zionists split sharply over credence in Franklin Roosevelt's pledges on Palestine. The majority, following the lead of the lantern-jawed Stephen S. Wise, proclaimed its faith in the President's recent campaign promise to implement the creation of a Jewish Commonwealth. A minority, whose spokesman was the Lincoln-esque Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, acknowledged the President's benevolent intentions. The Cleveland Rabbi insisted, however, that Roosevelt had purposely dragged his heels on the issue, papering over with high-sounding rhetoric the grim fact that hundreds of thousands of the doomed had been allowed to perish while the British, with American contrivance, kept the door to the Holy Land all but shut.¹ It is the purpose of this essay to evaluate these antithetical assessments of FDR's Palestine policy in the light of the archival evidence.

A few examples will suffice to prove that Dr. Silver's suspicions were well founded. On March 9, 1944, the President stated that, in the face of the manifest Nazi genocide, a Jewish National Home was more urgent than ever and that he would, in proper time, implement this goal. Yet that very same day FDR congratulated Speaker Sam Rayburn for holding the House in line *against* a resolution calling for a Jewish Commonwealth. Following this action, six Arab states were once more assured that no decision would be made on Palestine without full consultation with both parties; another way of saying that nothing would be done.²

In that election year of 1944, both parties vied with each other in promising the eventual creation of a Jewish state, the Democratic plat-

* This article was presented as a paper at The National Archives Conference on Research on The Second World War, June 14, 1971, in Washington, D.C.

1. Unpublished notes, intended as memoirs by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, but never completed before his death in 1963. "The A.H. Silver Papers," The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio.

2. Typescript of a statement made by President Roosevelt at the White House, March 9, 1944, to Rabbis A. H. Silver and S. S. Wise (New York, Zionist Archives and Library).

FDR to Sam Rayburn, March 9, 1944. Official File 700: Palestine, *Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers* (Hyde Park: Roosevelt Library). *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944* (cited hereafter as *For. Rel.*) V, 589-590.
Bartley C. Crum, *Behind the Silken Curtain* (New York, 1947), 39-40.

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form repeating almost verbatim the Zionist demand for a commonwealth. The President specifically endorsed this plank on October 15 and promised, if re-elected, to carry it out. On the very morrow of this commitment the State Department, with White House approval, dispatched new guarantees to the Arabs. Two months later another pro-Zionist resolution was killed in Congress as a result of presidential orders.³ Moreover, on three separate occasions Roosevelt approved a projected joint Anglo-American statement freezing, for the duration, the status quo in the Holy Land. The purported objective of this declaration was to silence Zionist agitation at a time when general postwar planning was already underway. For a complex of reasons the joint statement was never issued, but Roosevelt's consent to it is revealing.⁴

Zionist intelligence had uncovered the imminence of this joint statement and the broad outlines of other projected administration measures harmful to the Jewish cause. With the notable exception of the forthright Silver faction, however, American Jewish leaders pinned the blame for the thwarting of Jewish hopes upon a covey of anti-Zionist State Department underlings who would, in due time, receive their comeuppance from the White House. A few weeks before Roosevelt's death this grassroots Jewish confidence in the President was severely shaken by a series of happenings, widely broadcast by the media. These electric events involved the meeting between FDR and the King of Saudi Arabia on the President's return from the historic Yalta conference. Knowing that another summit meeting of the Big Three was in the making, noted Jewish lead-

3. For the 1944 platform planks of the major parties, see George Kirk, *The Middle East in the War* (London, 1953), 318.

The message of FDR to the 47th annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America, October 15, 1944, was transmitted through Senator Robert F. Wagner and is in the *Wagner Papers* (Washington, D.C., Georgetown University).

See also Wallace Murray to Edward R. Stettinius, Oct. 27, 1944 and Roosevelt to Stettinius, Dec. 9, 1944, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 624-626, p. 645, footnotes 7 and 8; and the following secondary accounts: Jacob C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York, 1950), 214; Jos. B. Schechtman, "Roosevelt and the Jews—I", *Jewish World I* (Feb. 1955), pp. 7-10 (March-April, 1955), pp. 11-13.

Twice, in 1944, the Division of Near Eastern Affairs of the State Department, with the approval of the President, made assurances to Saudi Arabia. Murray to Stettinius, Oct. 27, 1944. State Department Records (The National Archives) Files 867N.01/10 and 2744.

For proof that Roosevelt himself killed the second round of proposed congressional resolutions, see memo of a conversation between Stettinius and Senator Wagner, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 640. For new promises to the Arabs, Cordell Hull to American Mission at New Delhi, April 29, 1944, State Department Records, File 867N.01/2317.

4. The Zionist leaders feared that the issuance of the proposed joint Anglo-American statement would crystallize Allied policy in pro-Arab form. Silver to Arthur H. Sulzberger, Nov. 9, 1943, Silver Papers. Much information concerning this joint statement and why it was never issued is in *For. Rel. 1943*, IV, p. 763ff.

Proof that FDR approved the statement on three separate occasions, Murray to Hull, Aug. 16, 1943, Aug. 17, 1943; Murray to Breckinridge Long, Oct. 25, 1944. State Department Records, Files 867N.01/1908½, 10-2544.

ers, including even Albert Einstein, petitioned the President to find a place for Palestine on the Yalta agenda.⁵

Meanwhile, the State Department strongly urged FDR to meet Ibn Saud and reach an agreement with him to tighten the king's agreements with American oil companies whose concessions on his soil were now producing in gusher proportions. Secretary Stettinius also highlighted the fact that this country was in serious need of landing rights on Saudi Arabian soil to refuel military aircraft enroute to the Japanese front. It is obvious from this correspondence that Washington wished to keep the desert kingdom from returning to its prewar status as a British fief. Correctly suspecting that his chief might try to make a deal with Ibn Saud on Zionism, Stettinius reminded Roosevelt that any attempt to renege on American "solemn commitments" to the Arab world on Palestine would jeopardize this country's cherished economic and strategic interests in Saudi Arabia.⁶

Despite these admonitions, FDR clung tenaciously to his pragmatic belief that the grizzled king, in return for American technical aid, might agree to champion the Jewish cause. The President must have recalled two acid letters from Ibn Saud about the "vagrant Jews" who betrayed Mohammed and his uncivil remarks about Zionism in an interview which had recently appeared in *LIFE* magazine.⁷ Further, Roosevelt certainly knew of the dramatic failure of a wartime effort to enlist the Bedouin king, the religious leader of a fanatic Moslem sect, on behalf of the Jews. The gist of this scheme, as arranged by a longtime British confidant of Saud and approved by Churchill and Roosevelt, was to make the king the "boss of bosses" in the Middle East, and to give him £20 million, the money to be provided by world Jewry. In return, the king was to persuade other Arab nations to abandon Western Palestine to the Jews in exchange for complete independence. When FDR sent an emissary to sound out the King on the matter, Saud's anger reportedly knew no bounds.⁸

In the face of these stubborn facts, the President, against the advice

5. Silver to FDR, Jan. 29, 1945. Silver Papers; Wagner to FDR, Jan. 15, 1945. Wagner Papers.

6. Hull to FDR, April 3, 1944, Memos, Stettinius to FDR, Dec. 13, 1944, Dec. 22, 1944. *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 679-680, 648-649, 757-758; Henry L. Stimson to Hull, Oct. 27, 1944, *ibid.*, 748-749.

7. Ibn Saud to FDR, April 30, 1943. *For. Rel. 1943*, IV, 773-775. For the President's belief that he could enlist Ibn Saud's help in behalf of the Jewish cause, see Jos. B. Schechtman, *The United States and the Jewish State Movement* (New York, 1966), pp. 51-52, 103-104, 109-110. *Life*, May 31, 1944, June 21, 1944.

8. The British confidant of Ibn Saud was H. St. John Philby. Details of Philby's plan, the part played by Churchill and Roosevelt in it and the king's rebuff of FDR's emissary, Harold B. Hoskins, are detailed in: *For. Rel. 1942*, III, 550-551, *ibid. 1943*, IV, 792-794, 807-810, 811-814; Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York, 1949), p. 426ff.; Weizmann to Welles, Dec. 13, 1943, Silver Papers; memo of a conversation between Weizmann and Welles, Jan. 26, 1943, State Department Records, File 867N.01/1-2643 and a summary report of the affair by Nahum Goldmann, Jan. 17, 1944, in Felix Frankfurter Papers, Box 88, Reel 4, Library of Congress.

of all whom he consulted, tried for a long shot. In one fell swoop he attempted to bring Saudi Arabia into the American orbit and to find an Arab spokesman for a Jewish National Home. Perhaps FDR made the gamble because he was genuinely convinced of the workability of the Zionist blueprint. Or, more likely, the President was leaping in the dark. On occasion, he was given to such deviations from his ordinary caution in diplomatic matters when opportunity arose to capitalize upon his own impenetrable charm and considerable powers of persuasion.

King and President met on a sunny February day aboard the *Quincy*, lying at anchor in Suez waters. After Roosevelt carefully explained the tragic plight of tens of thousands homeless Jews, Saud said that the solution was simple—just follow an old Arab custom and hand over defeated Germany to the Jews. The conversation became stalemated, but not before the king made it clear that he wanted no western benefits of any kind if they were tied to cooperation with the Zionists. Moreover, he warned that any expansion of the Allied commitment to the Zionists would lead to certain bloodshed in the Middle East. Taken aback, FDR promised his royal guest that he would take no steps hostile to the Arab cause; which meant, of course, that the endless deadlock over Palestine would continue.⁹ Jewish leaders surmised the negative results of this colloquy at Bitter Lake, but their doubts about the President multiplied when Roosevelt ad-libbed some unfortunate remarks about the meeting with Saud in the course of a personal report to Congress on the results of the Yalta conference. Then, to quiet the Zionist uproar, FDR publicly assured Rabbi Wise that he still stood by his campaign pledge to support a Jewish Commonwealth. Subsequently harried by a letter from the king which equated Zionism with fascism, the President replied that his promises to Saud remained “unchanged;” guarantees that were repeated by the State Department to two other Arab states. By this time the President’s health was failing rapidly and he was preparing to entrain for his fateful journey to Warm Springs.¹⁰

This sorry record fully confirms Secretary Hull’s verdict that the Pres-

9. William A. Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud* (pamphlet, American Friends of the Middle East, Kohinur Series #1, New York, 1954) is a pro-Arab account and should be compared with Schechtman, *The U.S. and the Jewish State Movement*, p. 107ff.

See also William D. Leahy, *I Was There* (New York, 1950), p. 325ff.; Samuel Halperin and Irvin Oder, “The United States in Search of a Policy: Franklin D. Roosevelt and Palestine,” *Review of Politics*, XXIV (July, 1962), 320–341 and Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York, 1948), 872.

10. *New York Times*, March 2, March 17, 1945; Gaddis Smith, *American Diplomacy During the Second World War* (pk. ed. New York, 1965), 114; Halperin and Oder, *loc. cit.* The renewed pledges to the Arabs are in Roosevelt to Ibn Saud, April 5, 1945, Zionist Archives and Library, and Roosevelt to the Regent and Heir Apparent of Iraq, April 12, 1945, Official File 700: Palestine, Roosevelt Papers.

Inasmuch as this latter letter was posted on the very day of FDR’s death, it is unlikely that he was completely informed of its contents. Owing to the President’s rapidly deteriorating physical condition, this may also be true of the April 5th letter to Ibn Saud.

ident "talked both ways to Zionists and Arabs, besieged as he was by each camp." Moreover, in one of the very few instances where FDR committed anything to writing on the Palestinian hot potato, he advised Hull to take no sides on the issue since, "if we pat either side on the back, we automatically stir up trouble."¹¹ This note, penned during the darkest days of the war, mirrored the President's conviction that all attention must be focused on a knockout victory over the Axis by placing a moratorium on the discussion of all postwar territorial settlements. Political considerations in 1944 broke the President's resolve for a blackout on Zionism for the duration. Confronted by the press with the contradiction between his promises to the Zionists and White House opposition to the pending congressional pro-Zionist resolution, Roosevelt differentiated between a wartime policy dictated by military factors and a future situation "when other considerations can guide us."¹²

The evidence is so confusing that it is impossible to determine just what solution, if any, he had in mind for the problem of Jewish homelessness. The President was given to telling different stories to different men about the same subject. Moreover, when faced with a vexing question for which he had no answer, he characteristically tried shotgun therapy, flitting from one plan to another.

Thus, FDR told Dr. Chaim Weizmann that he was entirely convinced of the economic potentialities of Palestine, dismissing Arab objections to large-scale Jewish settlement there as impediments which could be silenced with a "little baksheesh." To Senator Robert F. Wagner, staunch friend of Zionism, the President envisaged World War II as a splendid opportunity "to put an end once and for all to the homelessness of the Jewish people." Yet, at another time, he wrote to the New York Senator that the trouble with Palestine was that while 500,000 uprooted Jews wanted to go there, the land was surrounded by hundreds of millions of Arabs waiting "to cut their throats the day they land."¹³ Nor is it possible to uncover any single plan for the solution of the Jewish territorial problem that the President thought really viable. Publicly on record for a Jewish Commonwealth to be established in the Holy Land, Roosevelt privately expressed serious doubts as to whether Palestine could domicile the survivors of the Holocaust without taxing world Jewry with more economic assistance than the traffic would bear. Hence, he often turned to alternate arrangements designed to meet the mounting refugee problem. He toyed with the idea of a "world budget" among the

11. *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (2 vols., New York, 1948), II, 1536; Roosevelt to Hull, July 7, 1942, *For. Rel. 1942*, IV, 543-544.

12. Press and Radio Conference #945, March 28, 1944. Press Conferences, XXIII, pp. 120-121. Roosevelt Library.

13. Halperin and Oder, *loc. cit.*; Roosevelt to Wagner, Dec. 3, 1944. In reply, Senator Wagner reminded the President that he had once told him that after the war we would get "a second bite at the cherry. That bite must put an end once and for all to the homelessness of the Jewish people." Wagner Papers.

free nations to accept the expellees but, despite strong encouragement from Churchill, he dropped the idea because he feared the political risk of securing liberalized immigration quotas from Congress.¹⁴

True to his fashion, Roosevelt kept a number of balls in the air at the same time. Ever since 1938 he had been flirting with the founding of a Jewish haven in some faraway corner of the earth, a project that intrigued him in his capacity as an amateur geographer. At one time or another he played with the idea of Northern Rhodesia, Cyrenaica, Tanganyika, Kenya, the seething Orinoco valley and a score of other possible places. All of these plans came to naught save an inconsequential settlement in Santo Domingo, the brainchild of the tyrant, Trujillo. The simple fact remained that, even if an out-of-the-way refuge could be found, with a climate suitable for a westernized urban-oriented folk, such a region would take time to develop. By contrast, Palestine, where the wayfarers would receive a cheering welcome, would offer an immediate asylum. But the British stood in the way of this logical solution and Roosevelt was convinced that it would be harmful to the war effort to force London's hand.¹⁵ So the President once more tried to solve the Palestinian puzzle. Musing aloud one day in 1943 he asked: Why not make Palestine a genuine Holy Land, to be administered by trustees representing the world's three major faiths? This was only a typical Roosevelt trial balloon, but whatever chance the scheme had of implementation was killed by a State Department underling who seized the opportunity to come up with so patently anti-Zionist a plan for administering the trusteeship as to render it ludicrous.¹⁶

14. Memo of a conversation with Dr. Weizmann, June 12, 1943; memo of a conversation between the President and Harold B. Hoskins, Sept. 27, 1943. *For. Rel.* 1943, IV, 792-794, 811-814.

See also Morris L. Ernst's speech at The Sixth Annual Conference of The American Council For Judaism, *The Council News* (May, 1950), p. 2ff., and Richard P. Stevens, *American Zionism and United States Foreign Policy, 1942-1947* (New York, 1962), 71.

15. For the President's earlier interest in an extra-territorial settlement, see *For. Rel.* 1940, II, 222-243. The entire subject is well summarized in David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (Amherst, Mass., 1968), 59-62.

The most cogent argument against an extra-territorial solution to the Jewish refugee problems is contained in a March 9, 1944, speech by Senator Robert A. Taft before the American Palestine Committee. There is a typescript of this address in the Wagner Papers.

16. FRD had hinted something about the trusteeship plan to Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Morgenthau earlier. John M. Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of War, 1941-1945* (Boston, 1967), III, 208. But the President first broached it seriously to Harold B. Hoskins on Sept. 27, 1943. *For. Rel.* 1943, IV, 807-810. The ridiculous suggestions of the Assistant Chief of the Near Eastern Division, Gordon P. Merriam, as to how to implement the plan is in *ibid.*, 816-821. From Murray to A. A. Berle, *et. al.*, Oct. 15, 1943, State Department Records, File FW 867N.01/2068, apparently the President was just thinking about the idea when the Division of Near Eastern Affairs rushed its implementation. Under-Secretary of State Stettinius stated that FDR had only once, in an off-hand manner, mentioned the trusteeship plan to him. From Murray to Welles, June 30, 1943, *ibid.*, File 867N.01/6-2443 it seems that the State Department, earlier than the President, had been thinking of an inter-faith plan for Palestine in order to quiet Vatican anxiety over the fate of Catholic shrines in the Holy Land.

As the pendulum on Palestine oscillated to and fro, one scheme recurred so repeatedly in FDR's thoughts that it is safe to assume that it represented his innermost convictions. This plan would create a semi-autonomous Jewish Palestine, to be melded into a political federation which would include Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan. A bundle of coincidental factors gave the scheme logic. A fraction of Palestinian Jewry had formed the *Ihud* (or Union) party which called for rapprochement with the Arabs along bi-national lines, albeit this group was thinking primarily of Palestinian self-government rather than federation in a greater Syria. Many non-Zionist American Jewish voices, including the prestigious New York Times, championed *Ihud*. At the same time, Roosevelt's idea paralleled a movement among the Arab states for closer union. The President argued that a Jewish state, included in a larger political body, would accelerate Middle Eastern economic and social development. But prior to his 1945 confrontation with Ibn Saud, FDR failed to grasp that an inflamed Arab nationalism would not allow sufficient concessions to the Jews in order to make either political federation or bi-nationalism in Palestine acceptable to the Zionists.¹⁷

In the waning months of his life, Roosevelt was talking of "some formula, not yet discovered" for the solution of his Palestinian dilemma. Evidently, he had begun to doubt his own notion that the Arabs would accept a Jewish Palestine in exchange for massive technological assistance from the West. Twice he stated to separate observers that the soon-to-be-born United Nations would have to create a Jewish Commonwealth which, in turn, would have to be defended, for the time being, by Anglo-American arms.¹⁸ We will never know if this was just another one of FDR's will-o'-the-wisp suggestions or whether, at long last, he was ready to substitute deeds for words.

Roosevelt's Palestinian diplomacy can be rated only as a failure. It did not make adequate preparation before the war for the major tragedy that was foreseeable; it did not make sufficient use of Palestine during the conflict as the most available haven of refuge; and no meaningful steps were taken to solve the Arab-Jewish problem at a time when the fires of war had rendered the international situation fluid. Moreover, the President's public statements on the issue did violence to the facts.¹⁹

¹⁷ For the formation of *Ihud* in Palestine, *New York Times*, June 14, 1942 and Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, p. 160ff.

Support of the State Department for *Ihud* is mirrored in a memo by the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Feb. 6, 1942, State Department Records, File 867N.01/1797 and in Murray to Welles, Dec. 12, 1942, *For. Rel. 1942*, III, 553-554.

Roosevelt's genuine interest in Arab Federation is attested by Sumner Welles, *We Need Not Fail* (Boston, 1948), 28-30. There is further evidence on this subject in Kirk, *op. cit.*, 312 and Halperin and Oder, *loc. cit.*

¹⁸ Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., *Roosevelt and the Russians* (Garden City, 1949), 289; Halperin and Oder, *loc. cit.*; Schechtman, *The U.S. and the Jewish State Movement*, 113.

¹⁹ In his speech before the American Palestine Committee, March 9, 1944, (*supra*, fn. 15) Senator Taft argued that the best time for a Palestinian solution was then,

For these blunders and misrepresentations FDR must bear ultimate responsibility, but historical justice demands an exploration of the circumstances which made his problem peculiarly difficult. The aging President stood at the head of the biggest war effort in all history, and sheer necessity forced him to delegate decision-making on secondary matters. Responsibility for the Middle East thus devolved upon the military chieftains and the State Department, with both groups sending anti-Zionist decisions up to the White House. The army, understandably enough, wanted arrow-swift victory with a minimum loss of men. This strategy required that the supply route to the Soviet Union be kept open so that the Russians could reverse the German big push eastward, thus buying time for the Anglo-American powers to prepare for the massive invasion of France. Inasmuch as the northern passage to the Soviet Union was impeded by ice and Nazi U-boats, the bulk of war matériel to Russia passed (after November, 1942) through the Persian Gulf Command route to Iran. The lands adjoining this vital supply artery to the Soviet Union were studded with American bases manned by non-combatant personnel and the War Department argued that, unless the restive Arabs who surrounded this Allied life line were appeased, a Palestinian uprising might endanger American lives in the region, pin down for garrison duty Allied troops needed elsewhere, and deprive the Russians of the Arabian oil which fueled the Soviet war machine.²⁰

In routine manner, Roosevelt referred all Middle Eastern correspondence to the State Department. Here, Secretary Hull and his successor, Stettinius, insisted that we take no position in the Arab-Jewish rift, a dispute which, they reasoned, lay within the jurisdiction of America's wartime ally, England.²¹ In actuality, it was not Hull but, rather, Wallace

while the Axis armies were in retreat. This theme was later developed by Dr. Silver (*Nothing to Lose but our Illusions* [pamphlet, text of speech at Hotel Commodore, New York City, March 21, 1945, n.p.]).

Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *History of the Second World War: British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London, 1962), p. 386, argues that the British position was such, during the war, that if Washington had insisted on a Palestinian settlement, London could hardly have resisted.

For Palestine's contribution to the war effort, see Kirk, *op. cit.*, p. 320ff.; Pierre Van Paassen, *The Forgotten Ally* (New York, 1943), *passim*. A chit from R. E. Murphy to Breckinridge Long (circa 1943) dwells upon reasons for Washington's hostility to a separate Jewish army. Breckinridge Long Papers, Library of Congress, Box 199.

20. Memo of R. L. Buell, July 6, 1944. Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers, Library of Congress, Box 45; Memo, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy to General George C. Marshall, Feb. 22, 1944, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 574-577.

Strategic factors in the Middle East are discussed in Eliahu Ben-Horin, *The Middle East: Crossroads of History* (New York, 1943), 199 and Woodward, *op. cit.*, 387. According to "The Roosevelt-Ibn Saud Letters," *Jewish Frontier*, XII (Nov. 1945), 3-4, at times Britain had to deploy as many troops in Arab countries to prevent an uprising as were deployed against Rommel in North Africa.

21. For Hull's position on Palestine see his *Memoirs* II, p. 1537ff.; editorial in *Omaha World-Herald*, Dec. 4, 1942; Mark Sullivan in *Washington Post*, Aug. 6, 1943.

It has often been suggested that Hull was restrained on the Zionist issue because his

Murray, veteran Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, who came up with most of the suggestions on Palestinian matters. Murray, whose animus against Zionism had long been most emphatic, repeatedly warned his superiors that if the United States forced Britain's hand on easing entry into Palestine, the United States would be duty bound, in the event of disorder, to help Britain police the mandate.²² Similar thinking also percolated upward to the White House from our legations in the Middle East. Cairo, Baghdad and Jerusalem sent repeated admonitions that the United States could not fight in the name of democracy if, in the process, its government denied self-government to the Arab majority in the Holy Land.²³

Roosevelt, in the fashion of all modern Presidents, often bypassed State Department channels in order to try his hand at personal diplomacy. The information which he garnered from these sources also damaged the Zionist cause. Sumner Welles was Under-Secretary of State from 1937 to 1943, but as a protégé and social intimate of the President he carried more than ordinary influence at the White House. Despite the feeling of his Jewish contemporaries that Welles leaned toward the Zionist position, archival evidence reveals that he shared the general anxiety that large-scale immigration to the Holy Land would delay the defeat of the Axis.²⁴ Staunch Zionist though he was, Justice Felix Frankfurter mentioned the Palestine issue in his chatty notes to the President only on the rarest of occasions.²⁵ If Frankfurter leaned backwards on the issue,

wife was of Jewish origin. See Anderson (Ind.) *Herald*, Aug. 29, 1943. However, as an appointive official, he was naturally more cautious on making pro-Zionist statements than FDR who, at least in election years, had his eyes on the Jewish voting bloc in strategic states. For Hull's attempt to restrain Roosevelt's play for Jewish votes in 1944, see Hull to Roosevelt, July 26, 1944, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 606.

22. Murray (1887-1965) had been Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs since 1929 and during the war became Political Adviser to the State Department. He was extremely opposed to the Zionist position. His views are well aired in a letter to Stettinius, March 8, 1944, Breckinridge Long Papers, Box 200, and in a memorandum of a conversation between Murray *et al.* and Morris Waldman of the American Jewish Committee, Nov. 11, 1943, State Department Records, File 867N.01/686.

Murray's anti-Zionist position was so well known at the time that Representative Emanuel Celler of New York complained to the President in a letter of Aug. 18, 1943, *ibid.*, File FW 867N.01/1985. An interview between the present writer and Dr. Emanuel Neumann, April 4, 1968, confirmed the archival evidence on Murray's influence and opposition.

23. This was particularly true of Alexander Kirk at Cairo and Loy Henderson at Baghdad. Kirk to Murray, Aug. 1, 1941, State Department Records, File 867N.00/8-141; Henderson to Hull, Nov. 11, 1944, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 628-629. For Kirk's plan to have the Jewish world leaders renounce the Balfour Declaration in the name of helping the war effort and how this scheme was vetoed by Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, see *ibid.*, 1941, III, 609-610, 612-614, 615-616.

24. See favorable view of Welles by Weizmann, *op cit.*, 435 and Dr. Nahum Goldmann, New York *Aufbau*, Dec. 15, 1967. The archival evidence reveals that Welles found Jewish immigration to Palestine "highly controversial." Welles to Roosevelt, April 8, 1943, Official File 700: Palestine, Roosevelt Papers.

25. Frankfurter to Silver, April 14, 1943. Frankfurter Papers, Box 86, Reel 2. Here the judge denied that he had ever promised to speak out for the Zionist cause as long

other White House intimates proved far less restrained: Admiral William D. Leahy, close to the seat of power as FDR's wartime military adviser, made no attempt to disguise his hostility to the notion of a Jewish State.²⁶ James V. Forrestal who, in 1944, became Secretary of the Navy, was almost pathologically anti-Zionist. This wiry, pugnacious man enjoyed close relations with the American oil magnates, first as president of a Wall Street firm which floated many of their securities and, later, as Under-Secretary of the Navy where he supervised fuel purchases. Convinced that the projected United Nations would fail to maintain global order, he argued incessantly that the United States must maintain full naval strength after victory in order to meet the Russian threat that would surely follow the end of our wartime marriage-of-convenience with the Soviets.

Forrestal accepted at full value mistaken estimates that our domestic reserves were nearing exhaustion, and, therefore, he reasoned that Middle Eastern oil was absolutely essential for our future security. A corollary to this proposition read that Uncle Sam must consciously woo the Arabs who controlled this incomparable strategic and commercial prize.²⁷

Because FDR so seldom committed his reasoning to writing, it is hazardous to analyze his motivations. It is an educated guess, however, that he was thinking, not only of preventing an Arab uprising during the war, but, also, of future strategic and commercial assets to the United States. These factors were brought home to him by two personal observers whom he despatched to the Middle East. In 1943, Patrick J. Hurley, lawyer and lobbyist for Harry F. Sinclair, pointed out the allurements of an American substitute for a weakened Britain as guardian of the Middle East and its priceless oil. Harold B. Hoskins, an American born in Beirut, was even more emphatically pro-Arab in the reports which he submitted to the White House following two separate missions to the Moslem world.²⁸

as he was on the Bench. See also Max Freedman, ed., *Roosevelt and Frankfurter: Their Correspondence, 1928-1945* (Boston, 1967), *passim*.

26. Leahy, *op. cit.*, 202.

27. Obituary on Forrestal in *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 4, 1949; Arnold A. Rogow, *James Forrestal: A Study of Personality, Politics and Policy* (New York, 1963), pp. 29, 181, 190-194.

Box 49 of the James F. Forrestal Papers, Princeton University, contains much material on Forrestal's insistence that a diminishing domestic supply of oil necessitated appeasement of the Arabs in order to procure Middle Eastern oil. But Forrestal also knew that the State Department economist, Herbert Feis, understood in 1944 that the domestic oil reserves had been grossly underestimated and that the United States could depend on commercial exportation from non-Arab countries and the discovery of new domestic reserves. Feis, *Petroleum and American Foreign Policy* (Commodity Policy Studies No. 5, Stanford University, 1944), p. 16ff.

28. Brigadier-General Hurley's report to the President, May 5, 1943, *For. Rel.* 1943, IV, 776-780; evidence of his animosity to Zionism, Leahy, *op. cit.*, 187 and I. F. Stone, "Palestine Run-Around," *Nation*, Vol. 158 (March 18, 1944), 326-328.

In sum, if the Zionists had a single champion in FDR's inner circle, he has covered his tracks beyond recognition. The conclusion is inescapable that, owing to domestic political considerations, the President merely sparred in his frequent White House meetings with Zionist big-wigs, invariably failing to put his oral reassurances and light-hearted promises into the executive pipeline.

We do not know if Roosevelt felt any pangs of conscience as he helped bar the doors of Palestine to Hitler's innocent victims who could find no other shelter. Any remorse that the President may have felt was, possibly, assuaged by the thought that the grim facts of war permitted him no option. Unquestionably, the Soviet factor weighed heavily in his decisions. Persistent reports from the American embassy in Moscow pointed out the unremitting hostility of Communist theology to Zionism and to the age-old Russian territorial ambitions in the Middle East. Hence, it was not difficult for Ambassador W. Averell Harriman to predict that the Soviets would soon openly side with the fifty million Arabs against the half-million Jews. From all parts of the globe warnings poured into Washington, many of them presumably reaching the President, of the dangerous long-run implications of an American pro-Zionist stance.²⁹

Quite possibly, FDR was less disturbed by the peril of future complications in Western Asia than by the fear of making a permanent American-Soviet détente impossible. The President viewed such an understanding as indispensable for the proper functioning of collective security in the postwar world. The State Department advised that any agreement on Palestine should be subject to Soviet consent.³⁰ If Roosevelt followed this choice, then no arrangement on the Holy Land could be made that would carry out his 1944 campaign pledges. Caught in this

For Hoskins' missionary background and pro-Arab orientation, see the Stone article cited above, Elihu Stone to Silver, Jan. 18, 1944, Silver Papers and the document authored by Hoskins, "The Present Situation in the Middle East," distributed to influential senators in early 1944, State Department Records, File 867N.01/2229. Hoskins' reports to the President following his missions to the Middle East, *For. Rel. 1941*, III, 596-597, *ibid.* 1943, IV, pp. 747ff., 781-785.

29. The basic hostility of the Soviets to Zionism is discussed in Hayim Greenberg, "Soviet Russia and the Zionist Movement," *Jewish Frontier* (Feb. 1943) and William A. Williams, *Source Problems in World Civilization* (pamphlet, New York, 1958), 30-31. With the Yalta Conference of 1945 in the offing, Murray tried repeatedly to point out to his superiors the danger of Moscow winning over 50 million Arabs should the United States, at Yalta, press the Zionist case. A brief on Palestine was prepared for the Yalta colloquy, but was apparently never used. Murray to Stettinius, Nov. 3, 1944, State Department Records, File 867N.01/11-344. After a visit with the President, Nov. 11, 1944, Stettinius took up the Palestine matter with Ambassador Harriman in Moscow and the latter's memo on the matter reached Roosevelt before he left for Yalta. Stettinius to Murray, Nov. 11, 1944. Harriman to Stettinius, Dec. 13, 1944, *For. Rel. 1944*, V, 636, 646-648.

30. *Ibid.*, 655-657.

For FDR's views on the necessity of Soviet-American accord in the postwar world, see Robert A. Divine, *Roosevelt and World War II* (Baltimore, 1969), pp. 51, 61-63, 87, 90-91.

vise, he stood still on the issue until death thrust the prickly problem into his successor's lap.

One of the great "ifs" of the Palestine story remains: What would have happened had FDR lived and Churchill remained in power when the war ended? While the Prime Minister had proclaimed himself "the heir of Lord Balfour" and "the architect of the Jewish future," he had frequently kept his American partner from giving the Zionist cause any meaningful aid. Churchill went along with the Colonial and Foreign Offices and the British High Command, all of whom insisted that any wartime showdown on Palestine would impede victory. Long after the tide of war had turned, Roosevelt was repeatedly told by the British that any positive action for the Jewish cause involved an unjustifiable military risk. In truth, the Prime Minister was as ambivalent on Zionism as Roosevelt was. A theoretical friend of the movement since 1917, Churchill naturally placed British interests first, and Foreign Minister Anthony Eden convinced him that the active promotion of Arab unity would preserve at least a fraction of England's once predominant influence in the Middle East. These interests seemed vital at the time, for in addition to oil concessions, imperial needs made it necessary to maintain the security of the Suez linchpin. Some world Zionist leaders suspected the sincerity of Churchill's promises for the future, but the Prime Minister did lessen the intensity of Jewish pressure upon the Allies by convincing the Weizmann wing of the organization, less militant than the Palestinian faction headed by Ben-Gurion, of his sincerity.³¹ Chaim Weizmann in England and Stephen Wise in the United States put their faith in the promises of the Prime Minister and the President that patience in war would be rewarded in peace by a joint Anglo-American effort to build a Jewish state on the banks of the Jordan. Did they intend to make good their promises? One can not say for certain, since, when the time came to redeem the note, one guarantor of the obligation had been laid to rest at Hyde Park while the other had been relegated to political exile at Chartwell. The overwhelming probability, however, is that, barring drastic changes in the circumstances of Middle Eastern politics, they did not so intend.

31. For Churchill's assurances to Jewish leaders see Summary Report by Nahum Goldmann, Jan. 17, 1944, Frankfurter Papers, Box 88, Reel 4; Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, p. 204ff.; Weizmann, *op. cit.*, 436-437. On Nov. 6, 1944, Churchill told Dr. Weizmann that his task would be eased in convincing some of his anti-Zionist subordinates if Washington took a hand in settling the Palestinian issue. Typed memo of a conversation between the two in Wagner Papers. The opposition that the Prime Minister faced in Anthony Eden's Foreign Office, the Colonial Office and in the Mandatory government in Jerusalem is detailed in Woodward, *op. cit.*, 385-387, 393-394. For evidence that Churchill's friendliness toward Zionism was shaken by the 1944 assassination of Lord Moyne by the Stern Gang, and that the Prime Minister resented Washington's repeated attempts to dodge responsibility for Palestine, see Kirk, *op. cit.*, pp. 12 fn. 1, 315-316, 331. Another factor was that Britain wanted to use Arab Federation as a cover-up for post-war imperialism in the Middle East. Churchill was, of course, an unabashed imperialist. Dr. Emanuel Neumann to Professor Carl J. Friedrich, Aug. 27, 1943. Silver Papers.

A Cruel God Or None— Is There No Other Choice?

ROBERT GORDIS

"GIVE A DOG A BAD NAME AND HANG HIM" HAS always been good hard-headed advice. In our day there is no dirtier word in the language than "the Establishment." Pin the label on a cause or an idea and it is damned beyond recovery. It is, therefore, natural, though regrettable, that even scholars and thinkers have not been able to resist the temptation to discredit opposing viewpoints by using the device of guilt by epithet.

Thus, Richard Rubenstein, in his zeal to propagate his version of "nontheistic religion," declares that contemporary Jewish theologians fall into two opposing categories that he calls "establishment" and "academic," the former representing the hidebound outworn doctrines of the past, the latter the relevant, vital ideas of the present. It is an interesting contrast he draws, even if a little less than convincing.

Undoubtedly, the great watershed in contemporary Jewish thought is the Holocaust, the brutal extermination by the Nazis of six million Jewish men, women and children. To this, the most monstrous program of bestiality in history, the free world, with only a few exceptions, reacted with passivity and indifference. The mountain of human misery created by the Nazi holocaust poses a major problem for the traditional Biblical faith that God works in history, and for its corollary that His righteousness is manifest in human affairs.

How can the Holocaust be justified? Only one response, Rubenstein declares, is possible for the conventional "establishment" thinkers—the Holocaust was a Divine visitation on a sinful generation. Where there is sin, there must be suffering; hence, the massive suffering of our age implies massive sin. This "justification" Rubenstein rightly regards as monstrous. He therefore rejects the traditional faith in God as no longer possible in the post-Hitler era. He insists that the Nazi campaign of mass murder cannot be categorized as merely another instance of man's propensity for evil differing in degree, but not in kind, from the wars and massacres that have disfigured human history through the ages. On the contrary, we are told, the technological processes of destruction utilized by Hitler, his sophisticated techniques of propaganda and the efficiency of the operation, make the Nazi Holocaust totally different from any other event in history. Hence, the only possible conclusion for modern man is that "the belief in God as the Lord of history must be rejected." Rubenstein believes passionately that "Jewish paganism is the most viable religious option available to contemporary Jews." In a re-

cent article, (New York Times, March 4, 1972) he urges Christians as well as Jews to adopt "non-theistic forms of religion often based on ancient pagan or Asian models." He himself opts for the "ancient earth gods and the realities to which they point," because they alone offer men the opportunity to "celebrate" what he, following in the footsteps of Sartre, Camus and Genet, regards as the human condition "entirely enclosed within the fatalities of an absurd earthly existence." In brief, modern man has only two choices—either a cruel God or none. For Rubenstein there is no God and Israel is His witness.

Before we examine, however briefly, both the negations and the affirmations of the old-new paganism, we should examine its psychological roots. The measureless immensity of the moral catastrophe of Nazism is undoubtedly the mainspring for this and similar approaches to the perennial issue of man's place in the world. But more mundane factors help to attract attention, if not assent, for such views in our time. Deeply rooted in human nature is the desire for novelty, be it in content or in form. The wish to assert one's identity in opposition to accepted views, to attack the "establishment" without knowing precisely what the "establishment" is, the all-but-universal impulse to "do one's thing"—these elements play an important role today. To tell the truth, this "modern" tendency is no modern invention. The prophet Jeremiah, himself a supreme rebel in his generation, twenty-six centuries ago declared:

"Two wrongs my people have committed,
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns,
that can hold no water." (2:13)

However, as Emerson, perhaps over-optimistically, reminded us, there is a law of compensation operating in the world. Two centuries ago, Voltaire delivered himself of the ironic observation that "the Bible is more celebrated than known." The statement is truer today than when first made. Yet even this sorry state of affairs is not a total loss. With the Bible virtually an unknown to modern men, they may perhaps be willing to approach it with an unjaded gaze. They may then discover that a viable faith in the Biblical God operating in history is still possible—that it is, in fact, far superior to the newly packaged religions that "celebrate" the "absurdity" of human existence.

It may prove helpful to restate in modern terms some of the Biblical insights on which our generation can build a modern faith that will sustain the spirit without demanding the abdication of the mind. Before doing so, it is important to point out that a peculiar form of moral blindness inheres in positions such as Rubenstein's. At which point does a sin become monstrous: at six million victims, or at five million, or three

or one? Is it not true that the suffering and death of a single child is an infinite calamity before the throne of God? Are the conventional theologians, therefore, wrong in regarding the Nazi Holocaust as morally on a par with the mass deaths perpetrated by the builders of the Egyptian pyramids, or the palaces of Babylon, or the roads and bridges of the Roman Empire? Do Dachau and Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen differ in quality from the massacres of the Crusades and of Chmielnicki, the tortures of the Inquisition, the pogroms of Czarist Russia? What about the conscious and systematic starvation of millions in the early years of Soviet Russia and Communist China, or the thousands of deaths in Biafra or in Bangladesh? Is the statistical yardstick to be employed in determining the dimensions of human suffering and the challenge it poses to faith in God?

If, on the other hand, the problem does not arise for the first time with twentieth century Nazism, we have a moral and intellectual duty to examine the insights at which men arrived in earlier periods of agony and wrath. Perhaps, after all, the Bible deserves its reputation! It deserves better than the simplistic approach of "revolutionary" theologians who offer little more than a caricature of Biblical prophecy, wisdom and faith.

We suggest that there are five Biblical ideas upon which modern men, like their predecessors, may draw in constructing a view of human life and destiny capable of sustaining them in the face of the evils of existence. These fundamentals, set down here in outline, need to be fleshed out in order to become truly alive:

The glory of life and the goodness of God. This basic principle of Jewish theology has become familiar to many moderns in the presentations of Hasidism offered by Martin Buber in the previous generation and by Elie Wiesel in ours. Unfortunately, these brilliant reinterpretations of Hasidism are highly personal. Thus, Elie Wiesel declares, "Man owes it to himself to reject despair . . . There is no alternative. *One must impose a meaning on what perhaps has none* and draw ecstasy from nameless, faceless pain" (Italics ours). Neither Israel Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism, nor his great successors, nor their disciples would have agreed that they were imposing a meaning on life where there was none. Unlike Buber and Wiesel, the Hasid had a source for triumphant affirmation of life, going back to the opening chapter of Genesis: "God saw all that He had made and behold, it was very good." The Rabbis in the Talmud, by a word play on the Hebrew, *tov me'od*, "very good," pronounced as *tov mot*, declare that even death is good, because the world has its source in the God of Life.

Man's right and duty to confront evil in the world. Biblical faith does not interpret man's cruelty, which reaches its apex in the Holocaust, as a "punitive visitation" by God that must be borne in submis-

sion. Far from accepting evil in the world, Jewish religious thought challenges God and demands His adherence to the moral law. Many of the most moving tales in Hasidic lore picture Rabbi Levi Yizhak of Berditchev confronting God in the name of his suffering, poverty-stricken brothers.

Here, too, the roots are centuries older than Hasidism. The Book of Job is a great existentialist protest against injustice visited upon God's creatures. The final judgment of the book is not that Job is wrong or blasphemous in challenging his Maker. On the contrary, it is the conventional defenders of God who stand in need of forgiveness: "For you have not spoken the truth about Me, as has My servant Job" (42:7). In a striking ironic utterance, God declares that it is Job who must plead that his antagonists be forgiven. The Hebrew Prophets were not only God's spokesmen to men, but of men challenging God. "You are righteous, therefore do I contend with you," Jeremiah declares. "Why do the wicked prosper and the treacherous succeed?" This strand of Biblical faith the Bible traces back to the Patriarch Abraham in Genesis. When the Lord decides to destroy the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham bargains for the lives of the sinners and hurls the challenge: "Must not the Judge of all the earth act justly?"

The core of mystery in evil. To be sure, Biblical and post-Biblical religion offer many positive answers to the problem of evil. We are reminded of a truth easily forgotten, that evil is not always triumphant—that, on the contrary, wickedness often does bring disaster in its wake. The Psalmists underscore the need for men's patience and faith, because the process of retribution is slower at times than we would wish, often extending over generations. Experience teaches, too, that suffering may turn out to be a blessing in disguise.

Yet no matter how valid these insights may be, the presence of the Book of Job, the profoundest work in the Bible, has always prevented the acceptance of these conventional man-made answers as final and complete explanations, for Job prevents men from forgetting that a core of mystery in evil remains. In the words of Rabbi Yannai in the *Ethics of the Fathers*, "We do not know the reason either for the suffering of the righteous or the prosperity of the wicked,"—or the death of a child or the devastation of an earthquake. The disastrous Lisbon earthquake of 1755 led to Voltaire's brilliant novella, *Candide*, which satirized Leibniz's philosophical optimism then fashionable. But Voltaire's masterpiece did not reckon with the profound insight of Biblical religion that, after all legitimate explanations were advanced, an irreducible element of mystery still inheres in the world. Voltaire urged his readers, "let us cultivate our own gardens," while the "tough-minded" in every age are willing to follow the sage Ben Sira's advice given nineteen centuries earlier, to "have no concern with mysteries." "The tender-minded," as William

James called them, continue to confront the perennial issues of existence in which the mystery of evil is central.

But the Book of Job goes beyond the position of *ignoramus*, "We do not know." Granted that a total answer to the problem of evil is denied us, yet a basic response is available in the "Speeches of the Lord" (chaps. 38–41), expressed, not explicitly, but by implication. The poet presents triumphant affirmation of the glory of the natural order often transcending human standards of beauty. He thus suggests, persuasively, that the moral order also has pattern and meaning, even when it is veiled from men, for both aspects of reality are the creation of the One God, who is both Lord of nature and God of history. These Speeches of the Lord out of the Whirlwind do not demand mere submission to God on the ground that man's understanding of the natural world is limited. With power and passion, they call for recognition of the reality of a pattern in the moral sphere as well. As against bitter atheism or sad agnosticism, Job offers a reasonable and hopeful faith in the structure of the world and human experience. Within this larger framework supplied by Job, more specific insights are to be found in such Biblical masterpieces as Genesis, Deuteronomy and Isaiah.

Man's freedom. Basic to the Biblical view of man is the conviction, stated three times in the Book of Deuteronomy and implicit everywhere else, that man is morally free: "Behold, I place before you this day life and death, the blessing and the curse." Every individual, every generation, every nation, every society is endowed with this fateful and perilous privilege of freedom in the moral sphere. It has been the great achievement of modern science, of biology, psychology, economics, sociology and other disciplines, to reveal the pressure and limitations to which man is subjected by virtue of his biological constitution, his sexual drives, his economic needs, his cultural background. But as all human experience demonstrates, no man is wholly *determined* by these factors—even the degrees to which he is *conditioned* by them differs with each individual. That man is morally free is reaffirmed by the Talmudic statement—"Everything is in the hands of God except the fear of God" (Berakhot).

The basis for this conviction lies in the Biblical doctrine in Genesis that man is created "in the image of God." This profound metaphor, the implications of which are far-reaching, declares that man partakes, on a small and imperfect scale, of the preeminent attributes of God. The "image" has been identified variously with the gift of immortality, the capacity for love, the love of righteousness, the power of creation. Above all, it has been interpreted as the power of reason. Now, what is reason in the intellectual sphere is freedom of will in the moral area, and this, in turn, is the basis for responsibility in the social arena, for without freedom there is no possibility of holding a man responsible for his actions, and the fabric of society must dissolve into anarchy.

Once man, unlike any other creature known to us, has been endowed with the fateful power of freedom of choice, he can, and all too often does, choose evil, including the monstrous evil of Nazism. The freedom of man is not only indispensable to religion—without it no society can long endure. The major ills afflicting human life—war, poverty and, in large measure, disease—are not the will of God but the act of man, the bitter fruits of the freedom he has abused. Consequently, not God, but man, can stamp them out by the exercise of intelligence and the moral will.

But even if the reality of man's freedom—and man's responsibility—is granted, an excruciating question remains. Why is it possible for some men to sin—and cause others to suffer? The agonizing cry, "Why do the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer?" will continue to reverberate as long as men live. Here, too, we have no total answer, but some light may be found in an insight of the unknown Prophet of the Babylonian Exile, whose words are imbedded in the Book of Isaiah. Basic to his world-view, but permeating Biblical and Rabbinic thought as a whole, is the concept of the interdependence of mankind.

The interdependence of mankind is no pleasant Sunday School platitude, but a hard reality of the human condition. The Rabbis were once asked to cite the greatest verse in the Bible. As might be expected, one quoted the Golden Rule in Leviticus (19:18), "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The other, more surprisingly, cited the prosaic opening verse in the genealogies in Genesis (5:1), "This is the book of the generations of Adam; in the day that God created Adam it was in the image of God that He created him (Sifra, Kedoshim). The verse embodies two fundamental truths about man—the dignity of each human being created in the Divine image, and the unity of all men derived from a single ancestor. The Biblical law-giver, prophet and sage all emphasize the thought that the entire human race is a unit, both "horizontally" through space and "vertically" through time. All the members of a single generation in space have a common destiny they cannot escape, and the various links in a family through time are also insolubly joined together, both for good ("the merit of the fathers") and for ill ("the sins of the fathers upon the children").

This concept of the interdependence of mankind was not permitted to remain a pious abstraction. It became an indispensable weapon for survival in the critical period of the Babylonian Exile. After the burning of the First Temple and the destruction of the Jewish State, the exiled Jews not only sat weeping by the rivers of Babylon, but agonized over their tragic lot. Some lost heart and, deciding that "God is dead," were assimilated to the triumphal paganism all about them. Others, of sterner stuff, vigorously challenged the justice of God that made them lowly and oppressed aliens while the heathen conquerors ruled the

world. In response to this situation, Deutero-Isaiah enunciated the doctrine that this uprooted and degraded people was the "servant of the Lord." The prophet believed that Israel was suffering contumely and misery at the hands of the nations, not because of its sins, but because of its role in the world as the teacher and witness to God's law of justice, freedom and peace. When the nations outgrow their moral immaturity and achieve insight and understanding, they will accept the Divine law of righteousness. They will cease to despise and attack Israel, and, on the contrary, accord it a place of dignity and honor within the family of mankind.

It should be noted that, contrary to widespread opinion, the prophet is not enunciating the concept of vicarious atonement, which is a theological doctrine, but the reality of vicarious suffering which is a fact of life, a datum of human experience that every mother, and, indeed, every parent, knows at first hand. When one loves another human being, one is bound to suffer with and for the loved one. Even when conscious love is absent—even when there is indifference or hatred—the fate of all men is inexorably intertwined, for we are all brothers in a merciless, as well as in a merciful, sense. As a graphic parable of the Rabbis puts it, we are all in the same boat and one man cannot bore a hole in it with the excuse that it is only under his own seat that he is making the hole.

That man's baleful actions take place on a more colossal scale today than in the past, does not render the truth of the prophetic insight irrelevant. For each soul is of infinite worth and all human suffering is on an infinite scale, so that six thousand crucified by Alexander Jannaeus in the second century BCE is qualitatively no less grievous than six million exterminated by Hitler, nor more heinous than three men nailed to a cross by the Romans.

When we become aware of the perilous nature of human freedom and of each man's interdependence and involvement with his fellows, and when we recognize the reality of vicarious suffering, we are no longer compelled to regard suffering as meaningless, life a horror, and the world an absurdity. It becomes possible, even in the most brutal of centuries, to believe that there is meaning and plan in the universe, even if it is far less neat and pleasant than we would wish.

To be sure, the horrors spawned by twentieth-century technological man are far more extensive than those of his medieval forebears or his ancient ancestors, but equally enlarged are his capacities for good. Perhaps the most important moral advance in the modern age is man's refusal to accept most forms of suffering as ineluctable elements of the human condition. Modern man denies that war is ineradicable, that poverty will always be with us, that racial injustice and social oppression are eternal. Perhaps the citadel of death cannot be stormed, but disease can be controlled and minimized. As against the major sins of which

modern man is guilty, we must set the major virtue of his refusal to acquiesce in evil as inevitable.

In the past, only the Prophets of Israel had the vision and the faith to believe that war would cease, that poverty could be destroyed and oppression be uprooted. Even Plato, the noblest of the Greeks, in sketching the outlines of the ideal commonwealth in his *Republic*, regarded war as a permanent condition of man and ordained a standing army to protect the Republic against the barbarians without the gates. It was the Hebrew Prophets who declared that world peace was the inevitable goal of human history. But the prophetic contribution went even further. Isaiah underscored the truth that world peace does not require the transformation of men and nations into angels, but, rather, the establishment of the moral law as sovereign above individual and group interests. What Plato could not conceive, and even the Prophets could envision only for the distant future, our age regards as entirely realizable, and since it seems remote in the present, we blame the "enemy" on the other side. The chaos and conflict, even the impatience and violence of our age, point, not to the absurdity of the human condition, but to its potential for good.

The faith that derives from the Bible recognizes that the Messianic Age of justice, freedom and peace will not be ushered in without pain and destruction. Armageddon remains the prelude to a new heaven and a new earth. The Rabbis spoke of "the birth pangs of the Messiah." Some of them went so far as to say, "Let the Messiah come and I not be there to see him." Nevertheless, the Messianic hope remains the capstone in the arch of Biblical religion and in a viable faith for modern men. As Martin Buber pointed out, even the Greeks had no conception of "the whole earth" and of "the end of days." That mankind was one family and that history was moving to a great consummation was the contribution of the Hebrew Prophets.

Undoubtedly, many men today, their spirits crushed by the world they see, will be unable to muster this confidence in the meaning of life. They will prefer one or another of the un-faiths that shock and fascinate so many of our contemporaries. But for many other men who are neither enslaved by nostalgia for the past nor overwhelmed by the evils of the present, Biblical faith is a rich resource that can speak to the mind as well as the heart. When reinterpreted with insight and perspective on the one hand, and with sympathy and concern for the human condition on the other, the Biblical faith emerges, not as a collection of platitudes, but as a revolutionary manifesto calling men to life, to hope and to action.

Walther Rathenau as Jew: Irony and Tragedy

LOTHAR KAHN

FIFTY YEARS AGO THIS JUNE, WALTHER Rathenau, then Foreign Minister and, thus, the highest placed Jew ever in German public life, was assassinated by young nationalists as he was being chauffeured to the *Reichstag*. From the time of his birth in 1867—the son of Emil Rathenau, who, by acquiring Edison's European patent rights, became a pioneer of the modern power industry and President of the *Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft*—to the time when he lay in state in the Hall of Parliament, Rathenau was a controversial and embattled figure. In his business relationships, his scientific investigations, his philosophic writings and his short-lived public career, he was an individualistic seeker for higher values. That search, while often misguided, achieved special significance through his nearly encyclopedic knowledge. It was his business acumen which, early in World War I, recognized the need to establish in the War Department an office—which he briefly headed—for the prudent management of raw materials. Privately, he questioned the war and took issue with Ludendorff's recourse to unlimited submarine warfare. But, when, a few months later, Ludendorff requested peace, Rathenau demanded a *levée en masse*, fearful of an unconditional surrender and the harsh peace terms which would be—and later were—exacted. It was Rathenau's knowledge of the world outside of Germany, his international contacts with industrial and cultural leaders, his known desire for conciliation and his financial expertise which led to his appointment in 1921, first as Minister of Reconstruction in the Wirth government and, later, as its Foreign Minister.

His thought was complex and easily misunderstood, but nowhere more than in his attitude toward his Jewishness. Leo Baeck, in one of his postwar lectures, called Rathenau “a seeker who also searched for his Jewishness.” True though this statement is, it does not adequately characterize this “first victim of the Third Reich,” this brilliant Renaissance man whose assassination symbolized for some the final bankruptcy of the German-Jewish symbiosis.

In his Memoirs, Prince von Bülow, a former Imperial Chancellor, recalls his initial meeting with Rathenau:

He was at the time (1909) barely forty years old,* but looked older: a

* Actually, Rathenau was forty-two.

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very attractive appearance. He was immaculately dressed. He approached me with equally perfect bow reminiscent of a Jeune Premier of the Théâtre Français . . . who in a play by Emile Augier or Victorien Sardou asks the stern father for the hand in marriage of his adored daughter. "Your Highness," he began with his resonant voice, placing the right hand over the left breast, "before I am honored with the favor of a reception, I would like to make a declaration which is at the same time a confession." He paused briefly, then with a beautiful expression, "Your Highness, I am a Jew."¹

Rathenau's biographer, Harry Kessler, comments on similar episodes. In Imperial court society, "where everybody knew everybody," Rathenau's intrusion—and a Jew's presence was invariably that—seemed strange at first, a curious blend of Julien Sorel entering French society or another Jew, Disraeli, entering British society. "Never for a moment did he (Rathenau) forget, or allow others to forget, that he was a Jew; he seemed to want people to feel that he was proud of his race. . . ."²

But it is debatable that this was, indeed, Rathenau's motive. "I will confess from the outset that I am a Jew," is also the initial sentence of *Höre, Israel!*, Rathenau's "youthful" and racist expression on the Jewish question. Actually, at thirty-five, Rathenau was no longer so "youthful." Fortunately, he repudiated the essay in later years and did not include it in his collected works. But even as he began to discern some redeeming features in Jews and Judaism, the quintessential negativism, self-deprecation and assimilationist demands of *Höre, Israel!* remained a source of permanent discomfort. All of the critics have termed his Jewishness the tragedy of the man Rathenau. His "confessions" of Jewishness tellingly reenforce Stefan Zweig's impressions of his friend:

. . . rarely have I sensed the tragedy of the Jew more strongly than in his personality which, with all of its apparent superiority, was full of a deep unrest and uncertainty. . . . In Rathenau's case I always felt that, in spite of his immeasurable cleverness, his feet were not firmly on the ground.³

Biographers, critics, memorialists have concurred with the description of Rathenau's entire existence as "a single conflict of constantly changing contradictions."⁴ From his father, Walther had inherited a vast economic power, but he had striven long, and in the end vainly, against assuming it himself. He personally possessed an enormous wealth, served on the boards of over 100 corporations in Germany and abroad, but flirted with socialist ideas. Yet the socialism which intrigued him was neither Marxist nor materialist, but "spiritualized," and with transcendental overtones. Trained mainly in the sciences, he strove to be an artist and philosopher, and was enamored of aesthetics. Though steeped in

1. Bernhard, Fürst von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten in den Aufzeichnungen über das Jahr 1909*, III (Berlin: Ullstein, 1931), p. 39.

2. Harry, Graf von Kessler, *Walther Rathenau* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1930), p. 44.

3. Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 181.

4. *Ibid.*

the myths of Prussianism and worshipping the strong, blond, blue-eyed men of the North, he thought mostly in international terms and refused the stamp of approval for many Prussian aspirations. He felt flattered by his fairly close relationship with the Kaiser, although he recognized the disastrous flaws in the Imperial personality and increasingly craved the rule of the people—whose smell, however, he could not endure.

But besides real or seemingly contradictory actions, there were within him two irreconcilable personalities, each striving for mutually exclusive goals. There was his practical intellect which, joined to a sizable ambition born of superiority, impelled him toward active participation in human affairs; competing with it was a trend toward resignation and mystical involvements. According to Count Kessler, Rathenau could never heal this split within himself.

Although he despised the one way to power (wrote Kessler), the way of cleverness and industry, he yet pursued it; he could not continue to the end on that other more lofty way of the soul, the way of Tolstoi, Gandhi and the great mystics. Thus, the sovereign power that comes from the soul remained beyond his reach.⁵

No wonder that Stefan Zweig concluded that “perhaps . . . his ceaseless activity was nothing but an opiate to cover up an inner nervousness and to deaden the loneliness that surrounded his inner life.”⁶ Indeed, in many of his letters, Rathenau alluded to the unbearable solitude which increasingly enveloped him—this despite a wealth of social relationships which included nearly all of the greats of Germany and Western Europe, from the Kaiser to Lloyd George, from Ludendorff and Hindenburg to Jakob Wassermann and André Gide. Yet there were few on whom this ever-restless spirit, self-encased in its own brilliance, did not eventually leave an ambivalent impression.⁷

Zweig maintains that the tremendous potential forces, which for so long were diffuse in Rathenau, became a single, concentrated force once he accepted the task of rebuilding Germany from the chaos of a lost war into a solid and firmly based Republic. But Rathenau's tenure was too brief to justify so broad a conclusion. During his short public career, he felt even more misunderstood, truly a prophet without disciples. Most likely, his failure to communicate and be influential—which he imputed partly to his second-class citizenship as a Jew—constituted a major aspect of his tragedy. Tragic and ironic elements revolved even about his assassination: he died at the hands of men whose Aryan origin, physical strength, and marvelous normalcy he had once admired; he was murdered as a friend of the Soviet Union, when actually he had preferred

5. Kessler, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

6. Zweig, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

7 Men who knew Rathenau, such as André Gide, commented on the initial fervor with which he pursued them, so that Gide almost felt compelled to keep him at arm's length in the beginning.

ties to the bourgeois West; because he was Jewish he was violently assaulted as a disintegrating influence on a Germany he loved and which he sought to save from foreign isolation and internal chaos. It was to the then current equation of Jew equals Bolshevik equals dissolution of the heritage and national betrayal that Rathenau fell victim, three weeks after his return from the ill-starred Genoa Conference. Actually, as ambivalent Jew, assimilationist *ad absurdum*, anti-Communist, integrator *par excellence* and pure patriot, the Foreign Minister embodied the antithesis of the equation which the zenith of popular anti-Semitism between 1919 and 1923—stronger, some critics have claimed, than during the Hitler era—had generated. In the prevailing anti-Semitic hysteria, it mattered little what Rathenau was, or even how he saw himself. A troubled nation chose to see its most prominent Jew in terms of the greatest danger to itself: the disturber-foreigner-radical. The Jew Rathenau wanted to be a German, but the German wanted Rathenau a Jew. "The last supreme attempt of a German Jew to service the cause of his beloved Fatherland in its hour of greatest need," wrote Sol Liptzin, "bared the tragedy inherent in the German-Jewish duality."⁸ It was also the logical culmination of what R. A. Pois has termed Rathenau's "Jewish Quandary."⁹

* * *

How the perverse phenomenon of Rathenau's early Jewish self-depreciation and racism came into being may never receive an adequate explanation. Relatively little of psychological significance is known about his youth. His biographers provide ample data on his immediate ancestry and his conversion from a humdrum student into a superior scholar. There are conflicting reports about the atmosphere in the Rathenau home—with Walther's friend, Lily Deutsch, asserting that stern business-minded parents discouraged any intellectual interests, while his sister claims that a deep understanding existed on the part of the mother who worshipped her son.¹⁰ Biographers have carefully scrutinized the decisive conflict between Emil Rathenau, President of Germany's largest utility concern, and his son—the all too familiar tale of radically opposed temperaments and value scales. But there is no evidence whatever that the conflict between father and son revolved about different attitudes toward Jewishness. The father simply detested the son's belletristic concerns and the latter rebelled against the father's *Geld-Denken*, his preoccupation with money. At thirteen he sent his mother a birthday wish that included these words under his drawing of a money-bag:

8. Sol Liptzin, *Germany's Stepchildren* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1944), p. 151.

9. Robert A. Pois, "Walther Rathenau's Jewish Quandary," *Year Book XIII* (1968) of *Leo Baeck Institute*, Robert Weltsch, ed. (London: East and West Library).

10. Harry, Graf von Kessler, *In the Twenties: The Diaries of Harry Kessler* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 337–38.

Die, you monster!
 You vile burden
 of every care
 and every sorrow!¹¹

Walther apparently resented his father's devotion to his empire, which was costly in the loss of parental attention. In the light of his later view of the Jew as *Zweckmensch* (man of purpose), it is likely that he began at this time to identify Jewishness with business, money, practical purposefulness. But neither this nor his university studies in the sciences leave valid clues as to his nascent racism. It would appear safe to assume that, even for the son of the powerful Emil Rathenau, certain social and intellectual barriers blocked the entrance to the intriguing worlds beyond. "In the youthful years of every young German Jew," he wrote later, "there is a painful moment he will permanently remember: when he becomes conscious for the first time that he entered the world as a citizen of the second class, and that no special ability or accomplishment can deliver him from this situation."¹² In numerous pronouncements, Rathenau was to protest this status and carry it further: he never ceased to criticize the mediocrity of Prussian leaders whose claim to eminent position was birth rather than quality. But, far more revealing, Rathenau never quit striving for the excellence and merit which he yet suspected would open few doors to him. Did he feel, then, that he was ready and fully equipped to enter the higher strata of German life, that he was being held back by others less well equipped, a visible reminder of their foreignness and non-adaptation? Did he, in his ambition and despair, accept the definition of Jews which the dominant cliques provided?

Perhaps these were the perverse notions which he formulated in seven years of provincial isolation when, to establish his personal sense of independent achievement, he directed his own firm, conducted his own experiments, some quite significant, and devoted himself to an intensive program of readings in humanistic and social studies. Certainly by the time he returned to Berlin, secure in his accomplishment, his personality was set, though not all of his views were.

When he published *Hear, O Israel*, under the pen-name of Walther Hartenau, his critique of contemporary Jews was unparalleled in its self-laceration. Anyone wishing to familiarize himself with the Jewish problem

should wander through the Tiergartenstrasse at twelve o'clock on a Sunday morning in Berlin, or else glance into the foyer of a theatre at night. Strange sight! There in the midst of German life is an alien and isolated race of men. Loud and self-conscious in their dress, hot-blooded and restless in their manner. An Asiatic horde on the sandy plains of Prussia. . .

11. Kessler, *Walther Rathenau*, p. 11. Helmuth Boettcher, in *Walther Rathenau, Persönlichkeit und Werk* (Bonn: Athenäum, 1958), also stresses the severity of the conflict with the father.

12. Walther Rathenau, "Staat und Judentum," in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, edited by Arnold Hartung et al. (Berlin, 1965), p. 108.

Building among themselves a closed corporation, rigorously excluded from the rest of the world. Thus they live half-willingly in their invisible ghetto, not a living limb of the people, but a foreign organism in its body.¹³

As Pois has remarked, the essay must be viewed as an extraordinary critique of Jewish behavior. But it was also a shamefaced commentary on Jewish physiognomy, depicted with a clinically objective eye which suggests the outsider. Use of the familiar *euch* confirms this impression. Rathenau exhorts Jews to look in the mirror, to note their poorly built frame, to wit, the high shoulders, clumsy feet and rounded form, to accept these as signs of physical decadence and to commence work on external rebirth and renewal.¹⁴ But even then the Jews' southeastern complexion is not likely to evoke a sympathetic reaction in the Nordic peoples among whom he dwells.

How thoroughly Rathenau understood the attitudes of the oppressor, accepting them in the process, and how little he searched in his own soul, is evidenced by one of his oft-quoted aphorisms about history and the "tragedy of the Aryan race."

A blond and marvelous people arises in the North. In overflowing fertility it sends wave upon wave into the South. Each migration becomes a conquest, each conquest a mainspring of character and civilization. But with the growing population of the world the waves of the dark peoples flow ever nearer, the circle of mankind grows narrower. Then a triumph for the South: an oriental religion takes hold in the Northern countries. . . .¹⁵

For a Jew to speak of the tragedy of the Aryan race shortly after the Dreyfus episode, at the same time that another Jew, shaken by this episode, commended the return to Zion, borders on the perverse or the pathological.

But to return to his critique of Jewry. Significantly for him, he reproaches them, the super-smart and worldly, for believing for so long that the possession of wealth also signified the possession of power. "Now you have your riches," he chides them, "and your rich people are regarded less highly than your poor people."¹⁶ Veering in another direction, he points out the high cost of non-assimilation. "If you want . . . to entrench yourselves in your Ghetto, to continue to strut about with false crowns of martyrdom—no one will prevent you."¹⁷ On them, the false martyrs, Rathenau has given up. But

. . . I know that there are some among you who are pained and shamed by being strangers and half-citizens in the land, and who are eager to escape from the stifling ghetto into the pure air of the German woods and hills. It is to you alone that I speak.¹⁸

13. Walther Rathenau, "*Höre, Israel!*", in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 90.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

15. Walther Rathenau, *Aphorismen* (25), 1902.

16. "*Höre, Israel!*", *loc. cit.*, p. 90.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

18. *Ibid.*

And what does he advise those who would listen? He speaks openly about a course without historical antecedents, of

the conscious effort of a race to adapt itself to alien conditions. Adaptation, not in the sense of the Darwinian theory of mimicry, according to which some insects have the power of adapting themselves to the color of their environment, but an assimilation in the sense that racial qualities, be they good or bad, which have struck their fellow-countrymen as repugnant, should be discarded and replaced by others more appropriate. . . . The goal of the process should be, not imitation Germans, but Jews bred and educated as Germans.¹⁹

Rathenau's almost mystical link to his killers and their spiritual descendants is reflected in his accidental use of the word *Ende* (final end) in relation to the solution he was proposing. His solution did not relate, of course, to physical extermination, but it was tantamount to spiritual and cultural suicide. Rathenau expected "willing" Jews to replace the qualities hated by the host-people with other "intrinsic" qualities of which Jews might be proud. But toward the end of his essay, Rathenau himself recognized that he had moved perilously close to a racist theory which he himself could not intellectually accept. Racial history was disproved by philological investigations "because languages are mutable; the victor receives it from the vanquished, the vanquished from the victor."²⁰ Later, Rathenau claimed that the essay on the Jew was intended as a warning, ". . . in the gloomiest mood of my darkest hour it became an accusation. . . . Today (1914) I hardly understand this accusation any longer."²¹ He also admitted that the tone of the essay had been wrong, that it had been lacking in love and seemed cruel, and that with cruelty one does not change people.²² While he thus repudiated the approach, the assimilation goal based partly on racist components stood intact. One must reluctantly accept Kessler's judgment that, despite Rathenau's intellectual rejection of racism, emotionally he could never wholly divorce himself from it—that emotionally he was "on the side of his opponents."

Yet, in his essay, *Staat und Judentum*, he faults the Germans who, over the centuries, have heaped injustices upon the Jews. "The injustice which . . . is perpetrated against the German Jews may not be the greatest, but it is an injustice. . ." Yet even here the tone of the remark is strange, though the foundation in reality is undeniable. Rathenau had been brutally frank in *Höre, Israel!* It mattered little whether there was justice and reason behind the Germans' dislike of the Jew. Life is what it is and history has invariably put the blame on the weak. It is futile to speak of the right of the weak. The right exists, but it cannot be attained through pertinacity. The German is satisfied as long as the dark

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

21. Walther Rathenau to Wilhelm Schwaner, 1914.

22. Quoted by Max Ruland, *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 85.

people are kept at arm's length. Under current conditions no one, he is certain, will ease the Jew's struggle toward equality or spare him a single step.

Between *Höre, Israel!* and 1918, Rathenau's views of Jewish history and achievement softened and his critique of German attitudes sharpened. Yet a clear, consistent progression of changing attitudes is difficult to discern and his pronouncements need to be examined as a whole. In a letter dated 1914, he declares categorically that his conceptions of the development of mankind are no longer tied to race. In a letter to his nationalist-racist friend, Wilhelm Schwaner, a relationship which itself calls for intensive scrutiny, he provides a four point refutation of racial doctrines. In point 3, he reminds Schwaner that no ethnic unit, and certainly none as small as the Jews, had such a decisive effect on the spirit of Man. Moses, the Prophets, Christ, Paul—later, Spinoza and, still later, Marx—signify pivotal points in the intellectual history of Man. “But in the literature of the anti-Semites,” Rathenau admonished, “the argument goes that the Jews were not capable of creative thought.”²³ In another sphere, Rathenau never stopped vaunting Jewish business acumen and the contributions to the economies of the Western world. Despite this warmer, more charitable stance vis-à-vis the Jewish role, he, at times, opposed the argument of a Rabbi who might remind him of a specific Jewish virtue. But his manner is neither hostile nor abrasive.²⁴

As his thought matured, Rathenau kept searching for new and valid principles by which to assess the development of mankind. In lieu of race, he now determined upon a distinction between men of courage and men of fear. The men of courage, largely Nordic, continued the knightly heritage of the Middle Ages, prided themselves on their strength and relied on their self-confidence in warding off danger in threatening situations. The men of fear, among them the dark-haired Jews, had to depend on escape and flight and, thus, were required by continuous anxiety “to gaze . . . toward the future.”²⁵ This combination of anxiety and hope provided, in turn, a basis for their strength, that of the intellect, “which leaves the present in order to live in the future.” This anxiety-ridden but hopeful individual, i.e., the Jew, attaches himself to concepts and goals which reside in the future and toward which he strives with all the strength of his intellect. These conceptual goals are purposes and, thus, “out of the man of fear develops the man of purpose: weakness, fear and purpose represent the genealogical table of his intellect (*Geist*).”²⁶

The Jews, men of fear, have been forced, out of weakness, to anticipate peril, to hope for a better tomorrow and, in the process, to

23. To Wilhelm Schwaner, in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 101.

24. To Rabbi Daniel Fink, June 21, 1912, in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 104.

25. Walther Rathenau, “*Von Schwachheit, Furcht und Zweck*,” in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 95.

26. *Ibid.*

strengthen their intellect. They have been outside the mainstream of Western societies which fostered the knightly system of values, which exalts the strong and detests the weak. The ethical system of the Semitic tribes was, and is, different. It champions the weak. "Courage is not deprecated but it remains ethically undervalued, along with beauty, strength and talent. As a universal virtue counts the pearl of fear: compassion."²⁷

While the portrait of the man of fear is by no means uniformly desirable, Rathenau confessed to the dramatist, Frank Wedekind, that he entertained a secret love for this man of fear. "For is he not the only truly unhappy man? And is he not suffering the only true nobility?"²⁸

Rathenau's personal thought was deepened and widened as the outgrowth of a trip to Greece in 1906, where, in an entry in his sketchbook marked *Breviarum Mysticum*, he postulated 10 theses, obscurantist enough in the original German and courageously translated only in the English edition of Kessler's biography. The word which recurs with passion and intensity is "soul" which, along with transcendence and love, will be the high frequency terms in his future writings. As Kessler saw it—and he had the benefit of numerous private conversations—soul alludes to inner experience which is unconnected to goal, purpose, or the attractions of material or earthly ends. Soul, which is intuitive and selfless, emerges as the antithesis of intellectuality, power or riches. The soul is divine, Rathenau informs us, when unfettered by purpose. Mechanization and capital emerge as opposing poles of soul and transcendence.

The significance of this new dimension is clear. Rathenau had previously identified the Jew as a man of fear, a *Zweckmensch*, but now he was postulating the superiority of the man with soul over the man with purpose. To be sure, purpose was necessary even as soul was the ultimate goal. Rathenau found this lofty way of the soul competing within him with purpose and the drive to power. "Have I stilled the urge to power within me?" he asks of a friend. "I fear not, but at least I know that I am fighting it."²⁹

While the supremacy of selfless soul over purpose and intellect once more subordinated the Jew and, as Rathenau probably saw it, the Old Testament, to a romanticized vision of the Germanic soul and the New Testament, he did find in Judaism a source which promised the mystical satisfaction he craved: Hasidism. In the same year that he undertook his journey to Greece, he read Buber's *The Tales of Rabbi Nachmann* and found there expressions of the soul and the Wherefores of Life as he had conceived them in the *Breviarum Mysticum*. Buber has supplied testimony that in their occasional meetings Rathenau demonstrated thor-

27. Walther Rathenau, "Zur Mechanik des Geistes," in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 99.

28. To Frank Wedekind, 1904. Quoted by Kessler, *Walther Rathenau*, p. 57.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

ough familiarity with his work and that he questioned him extensively about Hasidism.³⁰ Buber states further that Rathenau was eager to go to the sources themselves and that toward this goal he embarked seriously on a study of Hebrew, which he abandoned without explanation. But whereas he derived some of the quality of soul from the Hasidic notion that life existed as a means of experiencing joy in God, he found the ultimate formulation in St. Paul, who "had written the most beautiful lines that any human had ever committed to paper: the greatest hymn to transcendental love."³¹ Increasingly, the 13th Letter to the Corinthians and such Gospel teachings as "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul," brought him into the orbit of the New Testament. "I stand on the Gospels,"³² he declared at one point, but refused, nonetheless, to convert. Considering his aversion to Zionism and ideas of Jewish nationhood, his apathy, on the whole, to Jewish culture, his religious convictions would have seemed to make of conversion a natural and honorable step. But Rathenau looked upon it as dishonorable. Too often in his experience, baptism had connoted utilitarian self-seeking and practical advantages. Many in the Germany of his time attained positions which would not otherwise have been open to them. Rathenau argued that if the individual tried to improve his lot in this fashion, the collectivity of Jews could not. There would develop—and Rathenau recognized the racial basis of the new anti-Semitism—an anti-Semitism against the baptized. More important, baptism would appear to countenance German policy toward Jews and, thus, be tantamount to resigned acceptance of continued subjection. To Frau von Hindenburg he wrote about the possibility of his accepting the position of Foreign Minister in the final war years (1917) :

My industrial tasks give me satisfaction, my literary endeavors are like a necessity of life, but to add a third type of activity, the political, would tax my strength and go beyond my inclination. And if I were inclined to take to politics, you know, Madam, that external circumstances would obstruct such a move. Although my ancestors and I myself have served our Fatherland to the best of our abilities, yet as you know I am a Jew and as such a citizen of the second class. I could not become a higher civil servant or, for that matter, in time of peace, a second lieutenant. By changing my faith I could have escaped these disabilities, but by acting thus I should feel that I have approved the breach of justice by those in power.³³

He was especially vehement in spurning the notion that baptism could be a meaningful response to the overall *Judenfrage*.

But he also shied from conversion because of the nature of Christian-

30. Communication from Martin Buber to Harry Graf Kessler, extract quoted in Kessler, *Walther Rathenau*, p. 82 n.

31. To Rabbi Daniel Fink, June 1, 1912, in *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 103.

32. Rathenau's religious views are found mostly in *Eine Streitschrift vom Glauben* (1917), a response to questions put to him by a Christian.

33. Kessler, *Walther Rathenau*, p. 51.

ity itself. For while Rathenau was powerfully drawn, along with his Jewish mysticism, to the teachings of the Gospels, he could not abide the presence of a Church. Judaism, he stated, required no Church, did not maintain priests, but cherished teachers, did not countenance intermediaries, did not demand intellectual abdication or submission to doctrine. Without stretching or bending, Judaism could be reconciled with a modern *Weltanschauung* or, for that matter, with the teachings of the New Testament. Rathenau, it has been suggested, might have been a happier Jew, had not Judaism rejected the totality of Jesus, but accepted the bulk of his teachings along with those of other teachers.

R. A. Pois adduces other reasons for Rathenau's disinterest in baptism. The step might merely have signified conversion "from one to another."³⁴ Also, rather curiously, Rathenau regarded himself, despite some Jewish rebuffs, as a father-protector-model image for Jews. "I regard it as an obligation of common decency (*Pflicht des Anstands*) that I should feel responsible for the Jews,"³⁵ he wrote to the drama critic, Alfred Kerr. Despite this self-assumed role of protector, it is hard to believe Pois when he regards Rathenau's respect for Jewish intellectual and economic achievement as a restraining factor. Rathenau's pride in Jews came in spurts, was never a compelling force, and probably never equalled his secret resentment over birth into a despised community. In fact, this entire complex of confusing feelings and competing thoughts came to the surface at the bier of his father—when Walther, to the consternation of all, quoted Jesus for whatever reasons he had in mind.

Certainly there is a major truth in Pois' suggestion that Rathenau's attitude toward Jews was odd precisely because it was merely an attitude and little else. Though he proclaimed himself a Jew with suspicious frequency and without need, as with Bülow—using it partly as a martyr's halo—he was in love with Germany, and not with Jews. In Count Kessler's diary there are two conversations which he had held preparatory to writing the biography. One was with Lily Deutsch, Rathenau's friend of long standing; the other, with Rathenau's sister. Both women, while disagreeing on several points, concurred that Rathenau, on the whole unemotional and merely hankering after this or that feeling, was a passionate, romantic German, that he grew frantic in 1918–19 over the harm done to his beloved country, and even that World War I had broken Rathenau.³⁶ Lily Deutsch, who judged him harshly, claimed that his will to possess power was as much a piece of romanticism as his idolization of the blond and noble Teutons. The sister also looked upon him as an out-and-out romantic; she often teased Walther that if ever he met Siegfried or Arminius, he would run away because of their dirty

34. Pois, "Walther Rathenau's Jewish Quandary," *loc. cit.*, p. 127.

35. Quoted by H. M. Boettcher, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–3.

36. Kessler, *In the Twenties*, pp. 335–38.

hands. Lily Deutsch granted the genuineness of his love for Germany, while denouncing all else as appendage or pose.

The same interviews produced the statement that, in 1918, Rathenau began to suffer again because of his Jewishness. Undoubtedly, the insecure lover was made doubly insecure by the nationalists' anti-Semitic charges, especially as a result of Jewish involvement in the revolutionary leadership in 1918–19. "The overwhelming majority of German Jews," he wrote on November 16, 1918, "among them many whose ancestors have lived in Germany for centuries, have only one national loyalty (*Nationalgefühl*): German. Like our fathers, we wish to live and die in and for Germany. Let others found a nation in Palestine: we are not drawn to Asia."³⁷ Although three years later, Rathenau contemplated an investigative, fact-finding journey to Palestine, this did not in any way signify a change of heart. Having turned into an ever more potent force, Zionism constituted a threat to Rathenau's assertion that the Jew was nationally and culturally, though perhaps not confessionally, a German in every sense. Fundamentally, he had not altered the expression of national sentiment of many years earlier:

My people are the Germans and no other. For me, the Jews are a German tribe like the Saxons, the Bavarians. . . For me, the factors that determine whether one belongs to a people or a nation are those of heart, mind, character, and soul. From this viewpoint, I place the Jews somewhere between the Saxons and the Swabians. They are less close to me than Brandenburgers and Holsteiners and perhaps somewhat closer than Silesians or Lorrainers. I am speaking, of course, only of German Jews. Eastern Jews I consider to be Russians, Poles or Galicians, just as every German does; Western Jews I look upon as Spaniards or Frenchmen.³⁸

Rathenau recognized too well the weaknesses of his beloved country and retained enough Jewish sensibility to be afraid of the tumultuous events which began in October, 1917, and ended some two years later. "I am not pleased that currently the number of Jews in German public life should be so very high; however, this reaction cannot be prevented."³⁹

Yet he himself became one of those very Jews and, though far removed from the radicalism of many of them, he was quickly stamped in nationalist circles "as a noxious criminal on whom it would be an act of patriotism to take vengeance." As has been seen, Rathenau was acutely conscious of the political and personal perils of a cabinet post. His willingness to accept one, nonetheless, and one as exposed as the Foreign Ministry, must resemble a death-wish of sorts. Never in the whole of German history had a Jew been entrusted with so prominent and controversial a post—frightfully controversial after Allied intransigence at Versailles and later. His psycho-moral fatigue and weariness were joined to vague premonitions in his final letters. "I am the loneliest man I

37. To Dr. Apfel, 1918, *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, pp. 117–18.

38. Walther Rathenau, *Briefe*, v. 1, Dresden, 1930, p. 220.

39. To Lisbeth Stubenrauch, 1919, *Walther Rathenau Schriften*, p. 118.

know," he writes. Elsewhere he states that he often has the sense of being led, "gently when I act as wanted, roughly when I resist. . . Consider my life. Do you know one man of greater renunciation? . . . I have never found anything worldly that I want."⁴⁰ On the eve of his departure for Genoa to engage in delicate diplomatic maneuvering, he wrote to a sick friend:

This period which you call the highest of my life is certainly the most difficult; it is simply a farewell, for I know that what I have to undertake, whether I will or not, means the breaking of a life. For he who bows beneath this burden even for an instant is crushed to atoms. I shall return only to be overwhelmed by the abyss.⁴¹

Whether this was a prediction or premonition, he was correct. Upon his return he was greeted with the most poisonous slogans, speeches and assaults ever launched against a German official, and the vehemence of the attacks set in motion the conspiracy of his murder. Though he was specifically advised of the danger by his Chancellor, Rathenau accepted police protection for only a few days. Did he deliberately let himself fall?

Lion Feuchtwanger was writing his book about the Jew, *Suess (Power)*, at the time of the assassination. For some weeks, he contemplated abandoning the story of the influential court-Jew, Suess Oppenheimer, and replacing it with the tragedy of a contemporary Jew in power. The theme of *Power* revolves about the oriental philosophy of do nothing—want nothing, of resignation, the way of Buddha over Nietzsche. Feuchtwanger felt that Rathenau, too, had chosen the path of renunciation. But, soon, Feuchtwanger realized that he was too close to the contemporary tragedy to provide it with distance and perspective.

Over Rathenau's bier, Chancellor Wirth uttered these accusing and prophetic words: "The Enemy stands on the Right." Indeed, the murder of Rathenau was a signal of the resurgent power of the nationalist-militarist fusion. Historians have claimed that the public outrage over the killing could have been transformed into a bastion of Republican sentiment, and that inexperienced statesmen failed to seize the moment. The Weimar Republic was launched on its downward course, sliding toward the abyss of 1933.

It is significant that Rathenau's extraordinary intellectual and moral stature represented a zenith of the German-Jewish symbiosis, while his assassination, as Joachim Prinz recently remarked, symbolized the bankruptcy of that much-vaunted symbiosis. For if a Walther Rathenau, devoted patriot, denier of the personal and group-self, could not be accepted by Germany because he was a nominal Jew, then that co-existence, with all its intellectual-cultural flowering, was a chimera. It became frightfully evident that, in time of crisis, Germany could not even tolerate the most German of Jews, the most loyal of servants.

40. Quoted by F. M. Reusche, *Im Zeichen der Menschlichkeit*, 1968, p. 45.

41. Kessler, *Walther Rathenau*, p. 304.

The duality which Rathenau symbolized had ironic consequences beyond the grave. Whereas the leading assassin committed himself to the act because the thought of greatness issuing from a Jew was intolerable, the sole survivor of the trio of killers, upon his release from jail, joined the French Foreign Legion. In prison, he had studied the texts of Walther Rathenau and discovered their moral greatness. According to authenticated accounts, the assassin, Tchechov, in memory of Rathenau, assisted in rescuing hundreds of Jews in Marseilles in 1940.

On Iyyar's Holidays

JOEL B. WOLOWELSKY

FOR THE LAST FEW CENTURIES, IYYAR HAS NOT been a very exciting month. Except for an outing to the woods sometime around the middle of the month, there was nothing to do except literally count off the days. But in the last few decades, Iyyar has come into its own—primarily with the establishment of Yom HaAzmaut (Israel Independence Day—5 Iyyar).

There is no point in discussing here the significance of Yom HaAzmaut as a religious holiday for world Jewry; the lines have pretty much been set. The Orthodox “establishment” in Israel and in the United States consider it a “semi-holiday” along the lines of Hanukkah and Purim; the Conservative siddur includes an *Al HaNissim* for Yom HaAzmaut and the Reform movement recently announced that it had added this date to its religious calendar. To be sure, the Satmerer Rebbe considers 5 Iyyar the anniversary of a national disaster and the editors of the *American Jewish Yearbook* consider Yom HaAzmaut to be a secular-Israeli—as opposed to religious-Jewish-holiday. But, for the time being, at least, there is little more to be said about the religious significance of Israel Independence Day.

Iyyar, however, is more than Yom HaAzmaut. In this short article I would like to discuss briefly Yom HaShoah, Yom Yerushalayim, and their relationship to Yom HaAzmaut.

Yom HaShoah

Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Day—27 Nisan) misses being an Iyyar event by a few days, but its significance, I would like to suggest, lies in its relationship to Yom HaAzmaut. The rabbinate observes 10 Tevet as Yom HaShoah. The Israeli Knesset, however, chose 27 Nisan because it is the anniversary of the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto. (The Israeli “why-didn’t-they-fight-back” neurosis calls for a Yom HaShoah Ve-Hagevurah [Holocaust and Heroes Day—the full name of 27 Nisan], not just a Yom HaShoah.) Today, in Israel, and to a growing extent in the Diaspora, it is 27 Nisan that is observed as the memorial day for those killed in the Holocaust. It seems to me that the significance of 27 Nisan as Yom HaShoah—as opposed to, say, 10 Tevet—lies, not in its association with the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, but in its being observed about a week before Yom HaAzmaut.

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For many, the Holocaust raises a problem about God: How could He have let this happen? Where was He during World War II? This, of course, is a serious problem—but it is not the problem of the Holocaust; it is the problem of all of history. Where was God during the Inquisition? At the time of the pogroms? The Holocaust does not present a new challenge in this respect; it shouts an old question in such a loud voice that it is difficult to ignore it.

There is, however, a *new* problem raised by the Holocaust: the establishment of the State of Israel. In the Summer, 1967, issue of *JUDAISM*, Elie Wiesel notes his objection to Israeli politicians who claim that Israel is the “answer” to the Holocaust.

It is not [says Wiesel]. It has no right to be. Sometimes I feel it is a disgrace to link these two events and thus diminish them both. They are two mysteries, both historic and Messianic.

One of the most tormenting human dilemmas is the valuation of a good, desired event that flows out of an evil experience—or, vice versa, an evil event that is the result of a positive, good action. To what extent is an event tied to its history, especially when the two are at opposite ends of the moral spectrum?

Whether we like it or not, there is some relationship between the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. (There is, to be sure, no logical connection; the State would have come about, we believe, without the Holocaust.) Each event was, indeed, a “mystery;” but there is a third mystery: the relationship between the two. It was not Israeli politicians, but history, that linked them. Of course, this is not to suggest that Israel is the “answer,” we cannot find the answer to the Holocaust any more than we can solve the third mystery.

Israeli politicians may suggest wrong answers, but the Knesset—unwittingly, I am sure—has guaranteed that we will not escape the question. Each year, when we observe Yom HaAzmaut we are forced to recall that only a few days before was Yom HaShoah. The calendar has tied the commemoration of the Holocaust to the celebration of the establishment of the State, just as history has mysteriously linked the two events.¹

Yom Yerushalayim

Yom HaAzmaut is not simply a time to look back to Yom HaShoah or to the immediately preceding Yom HaZikaron (Memorial Day for

1. A possible Yom HaShoah-Yom HaAzmaut parallel comes to mind. Yom HaAzmaut is a Purim-type of holiday—a subtle miracle that can be explained along natural lines or responded to in religious terms (*kyymu v'kiblu*). On the Shabbat preceding Purim—*Shabbat Zakhor*—we read of our trouble with Amalek. Hitler was our Haman and Germany our Amalek. We are thus tempted to say that Yom HaShoah is the *Yom Zakhor* of Yom HaAzmaut. This parallel, however, goes too far. Purim is a direct result of that generation's encounter with its Amalek. We are not prepared to make such a statement about Israel and the Holocaust.

Israel's Soldiers—4 Iyyar) ; it is also a time to look forward to Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem [Liberation] Day—28 Iyyar) .

There is no need to dwell on the religious significance of Yom Yerushalayim. Jerusalem is now totally under Jewish control—a fact as troubling to Christian theologians as it is exciting to Jewish thinkers. All Israelis, secular and *dati* alike, have been forced to consider the holiness of Jerusalem (and, by implication, all of Erez Yisroel), although the secularists might use “non-religious” language in debating the issue. Diaspora Jewry, which might have been taking Israel for granted, has sharpened its relationship to the State. The “dead bones” of Soviet Jewry have begun to come to life. Secular Israelis, confronted with the tremendous response of world Jewry, have had to reexamine the Jewish—as opposed to Israeli—identity. The Six-Day War was a religious event, in and of itself. Clearly, Yom Yerushalayim is an Iyyar event, a holiday tied to Yom HaAzmaut, a celebration of the further unfolding of the redemptive process.²

I would, therefore, suggest that we exploit the calendar proximity of Yom HaAzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim and tie the two holidays together by developing the period between them. We can view Yom HaAzmaut as the beginning of a period and see Yom Yerushalayim as a kind of *ateret* to Yom HaAzmaut.

This would follow the pattern of the other Jewish holidays. The period between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur—between the “writing” and the “sealing”—is the *asseret yemei teshuvah*. The period between Pesah and Shavuot—between the celebrations of physical freedom and spiritual freedom—is the *sefirah* period.³ On the sadder side, the period between 17 Tammuz and 9 Av is *bein hamezarim*—the “three weeks.” The period between Yom HaAzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim—the “Period of Redemption”—should likewise be developed.

I have received a number of suggestions regarding a name for this period, but none was “good enough.” I, therefore, leave the name as an open question. With regard to liturgical observance, I would suggest the omission of *Tahanun* and/or the addition of certain Psalms to the daily service. On the “street level,” I think that some of the restrictions of the *sefirah* period should be cancelled. Some, but not all; we want the two holidays to stand out. Synagogues and Temples should schedule appropriate community-wide celebrations during this period. There is also a need for developing a home observance, but the development of home

2. Yom Yerushalayim is also tied to Yom HaShoah. The Shoah showed us something about the Western civilization in which we live. Yom Yerushalayim reinforces that lesson. (See Eliezer Berkovits' “Judaism in the Post-Christian Era,” in the Winter, 1966 issue of JUDAISM, and Jacob Neusner's letter in the Summer, 1967 issue.)

3. On the significance of the *sefirah* as a tie-in between the celebrations of the two freedoms, see Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik's “Sacred and Profane. . .,” reprinted in *Gesher*, June 1966, p. 16.

rituals for Yom HaAzmout and Yom Yerushalayim is a more pressing problem.

I think it would be appropriate to differentiate between the observance of Yom Yerushalayim in Israel and its observance in Galut. If we put aside technical halakhic reasoning, I think it would be fair to say that a main reason for observing *Yom Tov Shení Shel Galuyot* on Pesah, Shavuot, Sukkot and Shemini Azeret is that it accentuates the difference between a religious life in Israel and one in Galut. Thus, on the liturgical level, for example, I would suggest that, on Yom Yerushalayim, Hallel be omitted in Israel but recited in Galut.⁴ (This follows the pattern of *additional* observances in Galut—although it is usually an additional day of observance.) In Galut it requires extra effort to reach the same religious goals.

An Expanding Religious Calendar

We look forward, I should hope, to an expanding religious calendar, though not to additional wars to create additional holidays. We look forward to a holiday celebrating the complete opening of the doors of the Soviet Union and of the Arab lands to Jewish emigration, and to one celebrating the signing of a peace treaty. And, of course, we hope for the eventual abolition of YomAzmout, Yom Yerushalayim, and all the holidays of the *athalta degeulah* and their replacement with the celebration of the *geulah shlemah*.

4. The Chief Rabbis of Israel and Rabbi Shlomo Goren, former Chief Rabbi of Zahal and present Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, differ slightly in their reaction to Yom HaAzmout and Yom Yerushalayim. All agree that the former is a holiday that calls for the recitation of Hallel; Rabbi Goren feels that the blessings associated with saying Hallel should be included, while the Chief Rabbis call for their omission. With regard to Yom Yerushalayim, all agree that it is a holiday that allows for lifting the restrictions normally associated with the *sefirah* period; the Chief Rabbis feel that Hallel should be recited *with* the blessings, while Rabbi Goren maintains that Hallel—blessings and all—might well be omitted. (Interestingly, one of Rabbi Goren's reasons for the second ruling is the calendar proximity of Yom Yerushalayim and Yom HaAzmout.)

Maimonides, Spinoza and Ahad Ha-Am

ALFRED GOTTSCHALK

WHILE, UNQUESTIONABLY, THE METAPHYSICAL system which Maimonides expounded and which had so many vital points of contact with Arab metaphysics has long since outlived its relevancy, it bequeathed as a legacy the emancipation of reason, which, in turn, left an indelible imprint on the evolution of Jewish thought from his time to our own day. Ahad Ha-Am notes that this emancipation can be recognized in the evolution of the spirit of Israel from then on. Every Jew who left the *Bet Ha-midrash* of old and traversed the hard and bitter road from blind faith to free reason must have encountered Maimonides at the very beginning of his way. In those very first steps, which are the most difficult and dangerous,¹ he must have found a source of strength and sustenance for his spirit. This path was traversed not only by Mendelssohn, but by Spinoza and many other intellectuals, most of whom achieved recognition both within, and outside of, Judaism.²

There can be little question that Ahad Ha-Am had read both the works of Spinoza and books published about him, just as Spinoza himself, in his own classical Jewish studies, had carefully studied Saadia, Halevi, Maimonides, Gersonides, Crescas, and the rest of the medieval Jewish philosophers up to his own time.³

In an essay entitled, "Names That Have Lost Their Meaning," Ahad Ha-Am addresses himself to the views of Oswald John Simon and his proposal for the establishment of a new Jewish Church, which was to divest itself of its national Jewish tradition and claim only the accepted universal religious and moral principles. The removal of these Jewish national traits, customs and ceremonies was viewed as a step toward merging Judaism into humanity, requiring the *de facto* obliteration of Judaism, while retaining its name as descriptive of that monotheism which had characterized it, together with other beliefs now generally accepted. Against the methodology of the Simon group, Ahad Ha-Am called Spinoza to witness that it would be better for them to attempt to understand, as Spinoza had stressed, the origins and development of religious ideas rather than to mock them or bemoan them as was being done.⁴ Spinoza is referred to again in the essay, "A New Redeemer,"

1. *Kol Kitvei Ahad Ha-Am* (Tel Aviv: Dvir Co., Ltd., 1956), p. 366.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. vii.

4. *Kol Kitvei*, p. 262.

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where he is cited as the *terminus a quo* by Reinach, from whose time Jews have emancipated themselves from all the religious observances while, to the outside world, they remain “the glory of Judaism.”⁵ Ahad Ha-Am does not dispute the statement with regard to Spinoza, but proceeds to apply that description to Salomon Reinach and others.⁶

While Ahad Ha-Am does not state explicitly what he sees as weaknesses in Spinoza’s system, one may assume, in the context of remarks about him, that this attitude would be conditioned by Spinoza’s ignoring the national motif of Judaism in his thought and, again, by his being of the school of philosophers who championed “the supremacy of reason.” For Ahad Ha-Am, the essential problems of “philosophy” were not those which pertained to theories of creation, but those which dealt with the problem of Jewish survival, for according to Ahad Ha-Am’s hierarchy of values, the love of nation is paramount.

While Spinoza did not fit fully into the category of a “nationalist pantheist,”—that is, one whose ideas of God were pantheistic but whose point of departure in the specific area of Jewish thought was nationalistic,—Ahad Ha-Am found himself in close affinity with those who maintained this position. He vigorously defends their point of view and their right to the freedom of their beliefs so long as the pantheist “loves his people, its literature and all of the spiritual possessions that belong to it.”⁷

Ahad Ha-Am makes specific reference to a book on Spinoza by Dr. Manuel Joel, one of the pioneers in the field of Spinozistic criticism, in which it is contended that the earlier part of Spinoza’s treatise could never have been written were it not for the impact upon him of Maimonides’ *The Guide of the Perplexed*.⁸ The points of contact and the influences, both subtle and obvious, which Maimonides had upon Spinoza are, in themselves, a dissertation. Yet, if one were to focus upon some abiding influences of the one on the other, they would undoubtedly be the shared view that the doctrines of religion had to be “correct ideas,” reflecting the teachings of philosophy, simply expressed, and in language comprehensible to the common man. Ahad Ha-Am highlighted these as the central thesis of Maimonides’ *The Guide of the Perplexed*.

* * *

For Ahad Ha-Am, Spinoza’s thought characterized the end of the

5. *Ibid.*, p. 301.

6. “The Spiritual treasures of Judaism must be regarded with love and honor. They are *Kud’sha B’rikh Hu*, *Orayyta*, *we-Yisroel* (God, Torah and Israel). These are interconnected by historic bonds and are evidences of ‘the national will to live.’ One separates these phenomena only for the purpose of investigations as to their origins, development and the problems of cause and effect. Apart from this consideration, they are regarded as an inseparable unity.” *Kol Kitvei*, p. 292.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 366; and Lewis Browne, *Blessèd Spinoza* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), p. 98. The work referred to is: Manuel Joel, *Spinozas Theologisch-Politischer Traktat auf seine Quellen geprüft* (Breslau, 1870).

medieval period and the beginning of the modern world. In an intellectual sense, it was related to the birth of the critical mind, ready to perceive truth and to chart the historical evolution and development of thought, particularly as it related to the Hebrew Scriptures. Those who initiated major currents of philosophic speculation, whether they wrote in "dead languages" (Latin and classical Hebrew) or not, deeply influenced the essence of Western civilization. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, and Spinoza, among others, are numbered by Ahad Ha-Am as falling into this category.⁹

In Spinoza's *Tractatus* (1670), his radical innovations relating to the principles of historical criticism as they applied to the Scriptures were formulated, and were to have far-reaching subsequent effects on Biblical scholarship. Forthrightly, he assailed the traditional view that the Scriptures contain a timeless revelation, and relentlessly exposed the internal contradictions of Scriptures by what he called "the light of reason."¹⁰

If we would separate ourselves from the crowd and escape from theological prejudices, instead of rashly accepting human commentaries for Divine documents, we must consider the true method of interpreting Scripture. . .¹¹

In summary, this method "does not widely differ from the method of interpreting nature—in fact, it is almost the same."¹² As nature is interpreted by examining its history, deducing from history

. . . definitions of natural phenomena on certain fixed axioms, so Scriptural interpretation proceeds by the examination of Scripture, and inferring the intention of its authors as a legitimate conclusion from its fundamental principles.¹³

This path of investigation is open to anyone and error can be avoided

. . . if they admit no principles for interpreting Scripture, and discussing its contents save such as they find in Scripture itself—and will be able with equal security to discuss what surpasses our understanding, and what is known by the natural light of reason.¹⁴

Spinoza outlines his method and defines what the history of a Scriptural statement encompasses. First, one must investigate "the nature and properties" of the Hebrew language for both the Old and New Testaments. Second, each book must be analyzed in terms of the arrangement of its contents, under headings, so that diverse texts dealing with a specific subject can be brought together. Last, all ambiguous, obscure or seemingly mutually contradictory texts must be noted.¹⁵

9. *Kol Kitvei*, p. 94.

10. R.H.M. Elwes, tr., *The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1951), I, p. 8 f.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 99 f.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

Spinoza's views on the interpretation of Scripture found in Ahad Ha-Am a ready listener, in that Spinoza maintains that the supreme right of free thinking, even about religion, as with everything else, is in the power of every person who, therefore, wields the "supreme right and authority of free judgment . . . to explain and interpret religion for himself."¹⁶ It is not necessary to invoke any external or supernatural authority for this purpose, since the method is adaptable even to the average mental capabilities reflected in the totality of mankind.¹⁷ While Ahad Ha-Am would not cavil with Spinoza on this principle, he would, nevertheless, reassert his position that belief in religion is a matter of the heart, and belief in what Scripture teaches is dependent upon the "hypnos" which the past exerts upon us and the compatability of the contents of Scripture with the needs of the present. The Bible, Spinoza maintains, teaches explicitly, and in many places, what everyone ought to do in order to obey God, and this is capsulated in the commandment of Leviticus—"love to one's neighbour."¹⁸ In a practical sense, faith in the knowledge of God without obedience to Him would be impossible, and the enactment of good deeds is required, for "faith is not salutary in itself, but only in respect to the obedience it implies," or as James puts it, "Faith without works is dead."¹⁹ Spinoza here has reference to both the New and the Old Testaments, though Ahad Ha-Am would dispute the propriety of joining these two works together with regard to a single message. He clearly showed, in the essay written on the occasion of the publication of *The Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* by Montefiore, that he would take issue with Spinoza's specific illustration, if not with his over-all approach, that religion is to be judged, not by objective philosophic principles, but by specific "duties of the heart."

In Spinoza's discussion as to whether theology is, or is not, subservient to reason, he makes the point that "each has her own domain."²⁰ In this particular portion of the *Tractatus*, with one stroke of the pen Spinoza writes off the entire effort of medieval Jewish philosophy at a reconciliation between revealed faith and reason. Here he alludes to the point that theology can be judged only from within its own set of presuppositions—that is, in its creation of a scheme and a manner of obedience to dogmas of piety and faith that a theologian believes correct. Judgment cannot be exercised by any other means, such as that attempted by R. Yehudah Alpakhar, who maintained, as a universal principle of Biblical exegesis,

. . . that whatsoever Scripture teaches dogmatically, and affirms ex-

16. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 184; and James 2:17.

20. "The sphere of reason is, as we have said, truth and wisdom; the sphere of theology is piety and obedience." *Ibid.*, p. 194.

pressly, must, on its own authority, be admitted as absolutely true: that there is no doctrine in the Bible which directly contradicts the general tenour of the whole. . .²¹

Spinoza draws the absolute conclusion that “the Bible must not be accommodated to reason, nor reason to the Bible.”²² The function of reason is to sort out truth so that, at least in the area of moral certainty, we can grasp what is revealed. In this respect, Spinoza reverts to a previous principle of his that, in the area of moral certainty, it is impossible to attain a greater certainty than the prophets enjoyed. He notes, however, that their certainty was only moral and not rational.²³

Ahad Ha-Am would not dispute the three characteristics of prophecy: (1) a distinct and vivid imagination, (2) apperception of a sign, and (3) a mind turned to what is just and good.²⁴ Here Spinoza has created a tautology, in a sense, in that he defines the prophets functionally by what they say about themselves and what is said about them in Scripture, and he would primarily have them be the moral task force and the highest expression of moral worth that the Bible was capable of producing. In this doctrine, Ahad Ha-Am certainly had much upon which to draw, and he highlighted it in his exposition of Biblical morality.²⁵

Concerning another vital point which looms large in his thought, Ahad Ha-Am agreed with Spinoza’s contention that the ceremonial law attempted to preserve the Hebrew kingdom and that it was the Pharisees who preserved it subsequently.²⁶ For Spinoza, the ceremonial law is relevant only in a political sense; for Ahad Ha-Am, however, it represents the working out of the spirit of Judaism in its attempt to sustain the Jewish people in an environment differing from its natural habitat.²⁷ Spinoza makes clear what is to be believed in such areas as the ceremonial law and Scriptural narratives and what is the over-all purpose of belief in the Scriptures. In this respect, he is no different in his conclusions from Maimonides, when he states that belief in Scriptures is particularly necessary for the masses of people whose intellect is incapable of perceiving things clearly and distinctly.²⁸

But for the changing of the words, “natural reason,” for “spirit of Judaism,” Ahad Ha-Am and Spinoza have the same general overview of the Bible with regard to its credibility, its doctrine, its appeal to the intellect, and the tenor of its moral teachings, particularly as epitomized by the prophets. But they would disagree on several vital points relating to the philosophy of each and would call for different solutions to cer-

21. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

23. *Tractatus*, ch. ii.

24. Elwes, *Op. cit.*, I, p. 196.

25. *Kol Kitvei*, pp. 90-92.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 351.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

28. Elwes, *Op. cit.*, I, p. 78.

tain problems raised in the thinking of Spinoza because of different historical situations as well as predilections. A key example in this respect would be the treatment of the "election of Israel." Spinoza concludes a long argument with the statement that, "At the present time, therefore, there is absolutely nothing which the Jews can arrogate to themselves beyond other people."²⁹ He summarily discounts the moral mission, either in terms of the concentration of the Jewish spirit in Palestine or the dispersion of Israel in the Diaspora, and, hence, the notion of the mission of Israel to the gentiles.³⁰ The only area in which the Hebrew nation surpassed others was in its successful conduct of matters relating to government and in its surmounting of great danger. Otherwise, it was on a par with all nations, to whom God was equally gracious.

Ahad Ha-Am would take issue, of course, with this point of view, concentrating upon the eternal election of the Jewish people to serve a moral end, which he develops in his own concept of prophecy. Spinoza makes the astute observation that the Hebrews have been preserved, in great measure, by the hatred evidenced toward them by the gentiles and by the rite of circumcision which, he is persuaded to conclude, would alone preserve the Jewish nation forever, since it would psychologically set them apart from all the other nations of the world.³¹ Though not usually given to prophecy, Spinoza says, in his concluding argument on the vocation of the Hebrews:

Nay, I would go so far as to believe that if the foundations of their religion have not emasculated their minds they may even, if occasion offers, so changeable are human affairs, raise up their empire afresh, and that God may a second time elect them.³²

Even if such a second election were to take place, Spinoza would conclude that, with regard to intellectual and moral virtue, all nations are on a par, and God does not, and has not, chosen one people over another.

* * *

In his discussion of Maimonides, Ahad Ha-Am undoubtedly had much literature available to him, particularly in the Hebrew language, so that the bibliographical items which he selects as secondary sources must be accounted as being of significance. His specific reference to Dr. Joel's work³³ is of importance, for it has as one of its major theses Spinoza's indebtedness to Maimonides, a viewpoint already well substantiated. Spinoza readily reflects an intimate awareness of Maimonides' method of Biblical criticism as developed in the *Moreh*, which criticism he rejects. Yet, common to both Maimonides and Spinoza is the need to

29. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, p. 55 f.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

33. *Kol Kitvei*, p. 366.

explain the Bible rationally. Had Ahad Ha-Am written a major treatise on Spinoza, no better title could have been found than the one affixed to the essay on the Rambam, "The Supremacy of Reason." Because of his *Zeitgeist*, Maimonides found solutions to problems of the Biblical text on several levels. He tells us, in the introduction to the *Moreh*, not to ask too much from him with regard to the crucial problems of Biblical criticism.

You should not ask of me here anything beyond the *chapter heading*. . . For my purpose is that the truths be glimpsed and then again be concealed, so as not to oppose that divine purpose which one cannot possibly oppose and which has concealed from the vulgar among the people those truths especially requisite for His apprehension.³⁴

Clearly, Spinoza, in his time, held the thesis that "the natural light of reason" accessible to all men must function untrammelled and openly. What Maimonides sought to conceal by way of parable and metaphor, Spinoza faced without flinching. The price he paid was excommunication.

While Ahad Ha-Am attributes his emancipation from the narrow orthodoxy of his youth to Maimonides, he was certainly influenced by Spinoza, whose principles of Biblical criticism had been absorbed in Biblical scholarship as well as through the literature of the *Haskalah*.³⁵ The interconnected veins of thought among Maimonides and Spinoza stemmed from the common tradition of rabbinic Judaism which they shared and which, to a great extent, had already shaped the problems related to Scriptural exegesis.³⁶ The specific contribution of each of these thinkers lies in the unique way in which he grappled with these problems. When Maimonides' *Moreh*, with its challenging innovations, was published, he was already considered the outstanding rabbinical authority of his time. Therefore, it was not until after his death that the great anti-maimunist controversies raged. In the third decade of the thirteenth century, the rabbis of France issued bans of excommunication against those who studied the *Moreh* and the *Sefer Ha-mada* (the first book of the *Mishneh Torah*). In 1215, the Papal legate, Robert de Courçon, renewed the proscription against the entire Aristotelian theory. As a result, the works of Maimonides, which had been identified by Jewish anti-Maimunists as containing the entire Aristotelian theory, "were consigned to flames."³⁷ Ahad Ha-Am, the agnostic, was spared both excommunica-

34. Salomon Pines, tr. and ed., *The Guide of the Perplexed* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 6 f.

35. Works such as Nahum Sokolow's *Barukh Spinoza u-zemano* were, undoubtedly, known to him.

36. Stuart Hampshire, *Spinoza* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), p. 23; Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, pp. 8-60, *et passim*.

37. Solomon Zeitlin, *Maimonides, A Biography* (2nd ed., New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1955), p. 197.

tion and book burning, although the traditionalists who understood him all too well sided firmly against him.³⁸

Dr. Joseph Heller holds the thesis that Ahad Ha-Am varied Spinoza's expression of "the light of natural reason" to the "moral light" which emanates out of Judaism itself and is imbedded in the Torah and the Prophets.³⁹ In the essay, "*Tehiyah U-beriyah*," Ahad Ha-Am speaks of a "national pantheism" in which morality is recognized as something that emanates from within the matrix of Judaism and is not superimposed upon it by some supernatural power. "The moral light," "the moral ideal," are held by Ahad Ha-Am to be eternal absolutes identifiable with the "national spirit" of the Jewish people.⁴⁰

Ahad Ha-Am, no less than Maimonides and Spinoza before him, sought to render Judaism compatible with the truth as he perceived it. His system was far less free of inner contradictions than was theirs, for he sought to appeal to virtually all segments of Jewish life in his attempt to rekindle "the moral light" which could re-awaken the national feeling which he posited as existing in every Jew worthy of the name.

38. Aryeh Simon and Joseph Heller, *Ahad Ha-Am, Ha-ish, Po-alo ve-Torato* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Press, 1955), p. 188.

39. *Kol Kitvei*, pp. 291-293.

40. *Ibid.*

The Sage is More Important Than the Prophet

ABRAHAM I. KOOK

Translated by BEN ZION BOKSER

AS A RULE, POETS KNOW HOW TO PORTRAY THE nobler side of life, its beauty, its dynamism and vitality. They also know how to describe the evils of life and to protest against them vigorously. But it is outside the competence of the imaginative faculty to probe the particular conditions which preserve life and safeguard it from any of the problems that are due to generate the most destructive consequences. This falls within the competence of a body of knowledge that deals with particulars. Here begins the work of physicians, economists, engineers, judges and all those who pursue practical wisdom.

This distinction has even wider application. Prophecy saw the great evil of idolatry in ancient Israel, and protested against it with all its might; it envisioned the majesty and delight associated with the belief in one God, and portrayed it in all its radiance. It saw corruption in moral depravity, in the oppression of the poor, in murder, adultery, and robbery, and it was infused with the spirit of God to offer help and to rectify these conditions through lofty and holy exhortations.

But the little lapses which forge the gross body of sin—these remained hidden from the eye of every prophet and seer. Similarly, it was not within the sphere of prophecy to grasp how the habitual performance and the study of commandments would, after a span of time, release their hidden inner graces, and a wholly divine influence would decisively vanquish the darkness of idolatry. Nor could it grasp how slow negligence, which disparages the performance of the commandments, with their inferences and elaborations, would start a process of erosion, destroying the vessels in which is stored the exalted spirit that causes human passions, the straying imagination which abounds in beautiful shoots outside, though in poisonous elements within, to become ever more ascendent, automatically.

It is true that this perception was granted to the prophecy of Moses, about which God is quoted as saying that He revealed it to him “from mouth to mouth” (Numbers 12:8), the prophecy of undimmed clarity that discerned simultaneously the claims of general principles as well as of the exacting demands of the particulars. But there never arose another like Moses, as we are told, “There never arose another prophet like Moses whom the Lord knew face to face” (Deut. 34:11). It was,

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necessary, therefore, to assign the enunciation of general principles to the prophets and of the particulars to the sages; and, as the Talmud declares, "the sage is more important than the prophet" (*Baba Batra*, 12a). And what prophecy, with its impassioned and fiery exhortations could not accomplish in purging the Jewish people of idolatry and in uprooting the basic causes of the most degrading forms of oppression and violence,—of murder, sexual perversity, and bribery,—was accomplished by the sages through the expanded development of the Torah, by raising many disciples and by the assiduous study of the particular laws and their derivative applications. " 'The eternal paths lead to Him' (*Habakkuk*, 3:6)—the term for 'paths,' *halikhot* may also be read as *halakhot*, and the text would then mean that the laws lead to Him" (*Niddah* 73a).

In the course of time, the concern with the work of the sages predominated over the work of the prophets and the institution of prophecy ceased altogether; after some time the general principles declined, they were immanent in the particulars but were not readily apparent. At the end of the present epoch, when the light of prophecy will begin to have its revival, as we are promised, "I shall pour out My spirit on all flesh" (*Joel* 3:1), there will develop, in reaction, a pronounced disdain for the particulars. This is alluded to in the Talmudic statement that, at the dawn of the messianic age, "the wisdom of the sages will become unsavory and those who live on the boundary (that is, the sages who define limits in the law) will turn from city to city without finding grace (*Sotah* 49b).

This will continue until the radiance of prophecy will re-emerge from its hiding and reveal itself, not as an unripe fruit, but as the first fruits full of vitality and life, and prophecy itself will acknowledge the great efficacy in the work of the sages, and in righteous humility exclaim: "The sage is more important than the prophet." This transcending of one-sidedness will vindicate the vision of unity expressed by the Psalmist: "Mercy and truth have met, justice and peace have kissed, truth will rise out of the earth and mercy will show itself from heaven: the Lord will also bestow what is good and our earth will bring forth its bounty" (*Psalms* 85:11). The spirit of Moses will then reappear in the world.

Judaism in a Time of Crisis

Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple

JACOB NEUSNER

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SECOND TEMPLE

marked a major turning in the history of Judaism in late antiquity. The end of the cult of animal sacrifice, which from remote times had supplied a chief means of service of God, placed the worldly modes of divine worship upon a quite new foundation. The loss of the building itself was of considerable consequence, for the return to Zion and the rebuilding of the Temple in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. had long been taken to mean that Israel and God, supposed by prophecy to have been estranged from one another because of idolatry in First Temple times, had been reconciled. Finally, the devastation of Jerusalem, the locus of cult and Temple piety, intensified the perplexity of the day, for, from ancient times, the city, as much as what took place in its Temple, was holy. The cultic altar, the Temple and the holy city, by August, 70, lay in ruins—a considerable calamity.

My purpose is to survey some of the several ways in which individuals and groups of Jews of that day responded to the calamity. I do not propose new interpretations of individual texts or promise to present previously unknown facts, but, rather, hope, by putting together a number of hitherto unconnected data, to facilitate the comparison of the different forms of Judaism of the period.

The Political Problem

What kind of issue faced the Jews after the destruction of the Temple? It was, I contend, a fundamentally social and religious issue, not a matter of government or politics.

For most historians of the Jews, it is axiomatic that the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 70 C.E. marked a decisive political turning-point. For example, current rhetoric uses the year 70 as the date for the end of "Jewish self-government." Precisely what is meant by that rhetorical flourish is difficult to determine. If one means the end of Jewish independent government in Palestine, then that came to an end with the procurators, and, one might say, even with the advent of Herod. So the importance of the date must be located elsewhere. The Jews continued to govern themselves, much as they had in procuratorial times, though through different institutions, long after 70 C.E. Patriarchal government finally ended at the start of the 5th century—a matter of Byzantine policy—but by that time large numbers of Jews had already left the

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land, and their institutions of self-government persisted in the countries of their dispersion.

Then we must say that the significant event was the destruction of the Temple. But long before 70 the Temple had been rejected by some Jewish groups. Its sanctity, as we shall see, had been arrogated by others. And for large numbers of ordinary Jews outside of Palestine, as well as substantial numbers within, the Temple was a remote and, if holy, unimportant place. For them, piety was fully expressed through synagogue worship. In a very real sense, therefore, for the Christian Jews, who were indifferent to the Temple cult, for the Jews at Qumran, who rejected the Temple, for the Jews of Leontopolis, in Egypt, who had their own Temple, but especially for the masses of diasporan Jews who never saw the Temple to begin with, but served God through synagogue worship alone, the year 70 cannot be said to have marked an important change.

The diasporan Jews accommodated themselves to their distance from the Temple by "spiritualizing" and "moralizing" the cult, as with Philo. To be sure, Philo was appropriately horrified at the thought of the Temple's desecration by Caligula, but I doubt that his religious life would have been greatly affected had the Temple been destroyed in his lifetime. For the large Babylonian Jewish community, we have not much evidence that the situation was any different. They were evidently angered by the Romans' destruction of the Temple, so that Josephus had to address them with an account of events exculpating Rome from guilt for the disaster. But Babylonian Jewry did absolutely nothing before 70 C.E. to support the Palestinians, and, thereafter, are not heard from. The Babylonian and Mesopotamian Jews' great war against Rome, in Trajan's time, was not the result of the Temple's destruction, but, in my opinion, of Trajan's evident plan to rearrange the international trade routes to their disadvantage. Nor does one hear of any support from the diaspora for Bar Kokhba, so apparently no one was ready to help him reestablish the Temple in a new Jerusalem. At any rate, the political importance of the events of 70 can not be taken for granted. It was significant primarily for the religious life of various Palestinian Jewish groups, not to mention the ordinary folk who had made pilgrimages to Jerusalem and could do so no more.

We shall examine four responses to the challenges of the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the Temple, and the cessation of the cult. These responses had to deal with several crucial social and religious problems, all interrelated. First, how to achieve atonement without the cult? Second, how to explain the disaster of the destruction? Third, how to cope with the new age, to devise a way of life on a new basis entirely? Fourth, how to account for the new social forms consequent upon the collapse of the old social structure?

The four responses are of, first, the apocalyptic writers represented

in the visions of Baruch and II Ezra; second, the Dead Sea community; third, the Christian church; and finally, the Pharisaic sect.

When the apocalyptic visionaries looked backward upon the ruins, they saw a tragic vision. So they emphasized future, supernatural redemption, which they believed was soon to come. The Qumranians had met the issues of 70 long before in a manner essentially similar to that of the Christians. Both groups tended to abandon the Temple and its cult and to replace them by means of the new community, on the one hand, and the service or pious rites of the new community, on the other. The Pharisees come somewhere between the first and the second and third groups. They saw the destruction as a calamity, like the apocalyptics, but they also besought the means, in both social forms and religious expression, to provide a new way of atonement and a new form of divine service, to constitute a new, interim Temple, like the Dead Sea sect and the Christians.

The Apocalyptic Response

Two documents, the Apocalypse of Ezra and the Vision of Baruch, are representative of the apocalyptic state of mind. The compiler of the Ezra apocalypse (II Ezra 3–14), who lived at the end of the first century, looked forward to a day of judgment, when the Messiah would destroy Rome and God would govern the world. But he had to ask, How can the suffering of Israel be reconciled with divine justice? To Israel, God's will had been revealed. But God had not removed the inclination to do evil, so men could not carry out God's will:

For we and our fathers have passed our lives in ways that bring death. . . But what is man, that thou art angry with him, or what is a corruptible race, that thou art so bitter against it? . . . (Ezra 8:26).

Ezra was told that God's ways are inscrutable (4:10–11), but when he repeated the question, "Why has Israel been given over to the gentiles as a reproach," he was given the answer characteristic of this literature—that a new age was dawning which would shed light on such perplexities. Thus, he was told:

. . . if you are alive, you will see, and if you live long, you will often marvel, because the age is hastening swiftly to its end. For it will not be able to bring the things that have been promised to the righteous in their appointed time, because this age is full of sadness and infirmities. . . (4:10–26).

An angel told him the signs of the coming redemption, saying:

. . . the sun shall suddenly shine forth at night and the moon during the day, blood shall drip from wood, and the stone shall utter its voice, the peoples shall be troubled, and the stars shall fall. . . (5:4–5).

And he was admonished to wait patiently:

The righteous therefore can endure difficult circumstances, while hoping for easier ones, but those who have done wickedly have suffered the difficult circumstances, and will *not* see easier ones (6:55-56).

The pseudepigraphic Ezra thus regarded the catastrophe as the fruit of sin, more specifically, the result of man's *natural* incapacity to do the will of God. He prayed for forgiveness and found hope in the coming transformation of the age and the promise of a new day, when man's heart would be as able, as his mind even then was willing, to do the will of God.

The pseudepigraph in the name of Jeremiah's secretary, Baruch, likewise brought promise of coming redemption, but with little practical advice from the intervening period. The document exhibited three major themes. First, God acted righteously in bringing about the punishment of Israel:

Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face to us and our fathers. . . (Baruch 2:6).

Second, the catastrophe came on account of Israel's sin:

Why is it, O Israel . . . that you are in the land of your enemies. . . ? You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom. If you had walked in the way of the Lord, you would be dwelling in peace forever (3:10-12).

Third, as surely as God had punished the people, so certainly would He bring the people home to their land and restore their fortunes. Thus Jerusalem speaks:

But I, how can I help you? For He who brought these calamities upon you will deliver you from the hand of your enemies. . . For I sent you out with sorrow and weeping, but God will give you back to me with joy and gladness forever. . . (4:17-18, 23).

Finally, Baruch advised the people to wait patiently for redemption, saying:

My children, endure with patience the wrath that has come upon you from God. Your enemy has overtaken you, but you will soon see their destruction and will tread upon their necks. . . For just as you purposed to go astray from God, return with tenfold zeal to seek Him. For He who brought these calamities upon you will bring you everlasting joy with your salvation. Take courage, O Jerusalem, for He who named you will comfort you (4:25, 28-30).

The saddest words written in these times come in 2 Baruch:

Blessed is he who was not born, or he who having been born has died
But as for us who live, woe unto us
Because we see the afflictions of Zion and what has befallen
Jerusalem. . . (10:6-7)
You husbandmen, sow not again.
And earth, why do you give your harvest fruits?
Keep within yourself the sweets of your sustenance.
And you, vine, why do you continue to give your wine?
For an offering will not again be made therefrom in Zion,

Nor will first-fruits again be offered.
 And do you, O heavens, withhold your dew,
 And open not the treasures of rain.
 And do you, sun, withhold the light of your rays,
 And you, moon, extinguish the multitude of your light.
 For why should light rise again
 Where the light of Zion is darkened? . . . (10:9-12)
 Would that you had ears, O earth,
 And that you had a heart, O dust,
 That you might go and announce in Sheol,
 And say to the dead,
 "Blessed are you more than we who live." (11:6-7)

Yohanan ben Zakkai's student, Joshua, met such people. It was reported that when the Temple was destroyed, ascetics multiplied in Israel, who would neither eat flesh nor drink wine. Rabbi Joshua dealt with them thus:

He said to them, "My children, On what account do you not eat flesh and drink wine?"

They said to him, "Shall we eat meat, from which they used to offer a sacrifice on the altar, and now it is no more? And shall we drink wine, which was poured out on the altar, and now it is no more?"

He said to them, "If so, we ought not to eat bread, for there are no meal offerings any more. Perhaps we ought not to drink water, for the water-offerings are not brought anymore."

They were silent.

He said to them, "My children, come and I shall teach you. Not to mourn at all is impossible, for the evil decree has already come upon us. But to mourn too much is also impossible, for one may not promulgate a decree for the community unless most of the community can endure it. . . But thus have the sages taught: 'A man plasters his house, but leaves a little piece untouched. A man prepares all the needs of the meal, but leaves out some morsel. A woman prepares all her cosmetics, but leaves off some small item. . .'"

(b. *Bava Batra* 60b)

The response of the visionaries is, thus, essentially negative. All they had to say is that God is just and Israel has sinned, but, in the end of time, there will be redemption. What to do in the meantime? Merely wait. Not much of an answer.

The Dead Sea Sect

For the Dead Sea community, the destruction of the Temple cult took place long before 70 C.E. By rejecting the Temple and its cult, the Qumran community had had to confront a world without Jerusalem even while the city was still standing. In so stating matters, I am repeating the insight of my sometime colleague, Professor Yigael Yadin, who remarked to me that the spiritual situation of Yavneh, the community formed by the Pharisaic rabbis after the destruction of the Temple in 70, and that of Qumran, are strikingly comparable. Just as the rabbis had to construct—at least for the time being—a Judaism without the Temple cult, so did the Qumran sectarians have to construct a Judaism without the Temple

cult. The difference, of course, is that the rabbis merely witnessed the destruction of the city by others, while the Qumran sectarians did not lose the Temple, but rejected it at the outset.

The founders of the community were Temple priests, who saw themselves as continuators of the true priestly line, that is, the sons of Zadok. For them the old Temple was, as it were, destroyed in the times of the Maccabees. Its cult was defiled, not by the Romans, but by the rise of a high priest from a family other than theirs. They further rejected the calendar followed in Jerusalem. They therefore set out to create a new Temple, until God would come and, through the Messiah in the line of Aaron, would establish the Temple once again. As Bertil Gärtner points out (in *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament. A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism in the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* [Cambridge: At the University Press, 1965], p. 15), "Once the focus of holiness in Israel had ceased to be the Temple, it was necessary to provide a new focus. This focus was the community, which called itself 'the Holy place' and 'the holy of holies.'" Thus, the Qumran community believed that the presence of God had left Jerusalem and had come to the Dead Sea. The community now constituted the new Temple, just as some elements in early Christianity saw the new Temple in the body of Christ, in the Church, the Christian community. In some measure, this represents a "spiritualization" of the old Temple, for the Temple, as Gärtner points out, was the community, and the Temple worship was affected through the community's study and fulfillment of the Torah. But, as Gärtner stresses (p. 18), the community was just as much a reality, a presence, as was the Jerusalem Temple; the obedience to the law was no less real than the blood sacrifices. Thus, the Qumranians represent a middle point, between reverence for the old Temple and its cult, in the here and now, and complete indifference to the Temple and cult in favor of the Christians' utter spiritualization of both, represented, for example, in the Letter to the Hebrews.

If the old Temple is destroyed, then how will Israel make atonement? The Qumranian answer, Gärtner tells us, is that "the life of the community in perfect obedience to the Law is represented as the true sacrifice offered in the new Temple." The community, thus, takes over the holiness and the functions of the Temple (p. 44) and, so, is the "only means of maintaining the holiness of Israel and making atonement for sin."

When these things come to pass in Israel according to all these laws, it is for the foundation of the holy spirit, for eternal truth, for the atonement of the guilt of sin and misdeeds, and for the well-being of the land by means of the flesh of burnt offerings and the fat of sacrifices, that is, the right offerings of the lips as a righteous sweet savour and a perfect way of life as a free-will offering, pleasing to God. . . (Manual of Discipline 9:3ff.)

The response of the Dead Sea sect, therefore, was to reconstruct the Temple and to reinterpret the nature and substance of sacrifice. The community constituted the reconstructed Temple. The life of Torah and obedience to its commandments formed the new sacrifice.

The Christian Community

The study of Judaism in late antiquity comprehends a considerable part of early Christian experience, simply because for a long time in Palestine, as well as in much of the diaspora, the Christian was another kind of Jew and saw himself as such. Moreover, the Christians, whether originally Jewish or otherwise, took over the antecedent holy books and much of the ritual life of Judaism. For our purposes they serve, therefore, as another form of Judaism, one which differed from the rest primarily in regarding the world as having been redeemed through the Word and Cross of Jesus. But one must hasten to stress the complexity of the Christian evidences. Indeed, the response of the Christians to the destruction of the Temple cannot be simplified and regarded as essentially unitary.

Because of their faith in the crucified and risen Christ, Christians experienced the end of the old cult and the old Temple before it actually took place, much like the Qumran sectarians. They had to work out the meaning of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and whether the essays on that central problem were done before or after 70 C.E. is of no consequence. The issues of August, 70, confronted Qumranians and Christians for other than narrowly historical reasons; for both the events of that month took place, so to speak, in other than military and political modes. But the effects were much the same. The Christians, therefore, resemble the Qumranians in having had to face the end of the cult before it actually took place, but they were like the Pharisees in having to confront the actual destruction of the Temple, here and now.

Like the Qumranians, the Christian Jews criticized the Jerusalem Temple and its cult. Both groups in common believed that the last days had begun. Both believed that God had come to dwell with them, as he had once dwelled in the Temple (Gärtner, p. 100). The sacrifices of the Temple were replaced, therefore, by the sacrifice of a blameless life and by other spiritual deeds. But the Christians differ on one important point. To them, the final sacrifice had already taken place; the perfect priest had offered up the perfect holocaust, his own body. So, for the Christians, Christ on the cross completed the old sanctity and inaugurated the new. This belief took shape in different ways. For Paul, in 1 Cor. 3:16-17, the Church is the new Temple, Christ is the foundation of the "spiritual" building. Ephesians 2:18ff. has Christ as the corner-stone of the new building, the company of Christians constituting the Temple.

Lloyd Gaston (in *No Stone on Another. Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970], pp. 97ff.) has persuasively argued that the Jerusalem Christians probably did not continue to worship in the Temple. Jesus was fundamentally indifferent to the cult and, for him, Gaston claims (p. 240), the functions of the old Temple were to be fulfilled in the new Temple which Jesus had come to found. That new Temple was, as at Qumran, the community, not himself alone. Gaston says that the church, from the beginning, was uninvolved in the cult of the Temple. For the Christians long before 70, as much as for those coming later on, the Temple had ceased to exist as a holy place. But, unlike the Qumranian community, the Christian Jews continued to revere Jerusalem as the holy city—an important distinction. The Temple, before 70, served as the focus of Israel's national cult; it was, therefore, to be used as a place of proclamation of the Gospel. But while the early Christians felt a solidarity with Israel the people, with Jerusalem, and with the Temple, to them the cult of the Temple was meaningless, for the forgiveness of sins had taken place once for all through the last sacrifice, which rendered the continuation of the cult a matter of indifference.

Perhaps the single most coherent statement of the Christian view of cult comes in Hebrews. Whether or not Hebrews is representative of many Christians or comes as early as 70 C.E. is not our concern. What is striking is that the Letter explores the great issues of 70, the issues of cult, Temple, sacrifice, priesthood, atonement, and redemption. Its author takes for granted that the church is the Temple, that Jesus is the builder of the Temple, and that he is also the perfect priest and the final and most unblemished sacrifice. Material sacrifices might suffice for the ceremonial cleansing of an earthly sanctuary, but if sinful men are to approach God in a heavenly sanctuary, a sacrifice different in kind and better in degree is called for (F. F. Bruce, "Hebrews," *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Matthew Black and H. H. Rowley [London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1962], p. 1015). It is Jesus who is that perfect sacrifice, who has entered the true, heavenly sanctuary and now represents his people before God: "By his death he has consecrated the new covenant together with the heavenly sanctuary itself." Therefore, no further sacrifice—his or others'—is needed.

The Pharisees Before 70

We know very little about the Pharisees before the time of Herod. During Maccabean days, according to Josephus, our sole reliable evidence, they appear as a political party, competing with the Sadducees, another party, for control of the court and government. Afterward, they all but fade out of Josephus's narrative. But the later rabbinical literature fills the gap—with what degree of reliability I do not here wish to say—

and tells a great many stories about Pharisaic masters from Shammai and Hillel to the destruction. It also ascribes numerous sayings, particularly on matters of law, both to the masters and to the Houses of Shammai and of Hillel. These circles of disciples seem to have flourished in the first century, down to 70 and beyond.

The legal materials attributed by later rabbis to the pre-70 Pharisees are thematically congruent to the stories and sayings about Pharisees in the New Testament Gospels, and I take them to be accurate in substance, if not in detail, as representations of the main issues of Pharisaic law. After 70, the masters of Yavneh seem to have included a predominant element of Pharisees, and the post-70 rabbis assuredly regarded themselves as the continuators of Pharisaism. Yoḥanan ben Zakkai, who first stood at the head of the Yavnean circle, was later on said to have been a disciple of Hillel. More credibly, Gamaliel II, who succeeded Yoḥanan as head of the Yavnean institution, is regarded as the grandson of Gamaliel, a Pharisee in the council of the Temple who is mentioned in Acts 5:34 in connection with the trial of Paul. In all, therefore, we shall have to regard the Yavnean rabbis as successors of the pre-70 Pharisees and treat the two as a single sect, or kind, of Judaism.

What was the dominant trait of Pharisaism before 70? It was, as depicted both in the rabbinic traditions about the Pharisees and in the Gospels, concern for certain matters of rite, in particular, eating one's meals in a state of ritual purity as if one were a Temple priest, and carefully giving the required tithes and offerings due to the priesthood. The Gospels' agenda on Pharisaism also added fasting, Sabbath-observance, vows and oaths, and the like, but the main point was keeping the ritual purity laws outside of the Temple, where the priests had to observe ritual purity when they carried out the requirements of the cult. To be sure, the Gospels also include a fair amount of hostile polemic, some of it rather extreme, but these intra-Judaic matters are not our concern. All one may learn from the accusations, for instance, that the Pharisees were a brood of vipers, morally blind, sinners, and unfaithful, is one fact: Christian Jews and Pharisaic Jews were at odds.

The Pharisees, thus, were those Jews who believed that one must keep the purity laws outside of the Temple. Other Jews, following the plain sense of Leviticus, supposed that purity laws were to be kept only in the Temple, where the priests had to enter a state of ritual purity in order to carry out the requirements of the cult, such as animal sacrifice. They also had to eat their Temple food in a state of ritual purity, but lay people did not. To be sure, everyone who went to the Temple had to be ritually pure, but outside of the Temple the laws of ritual purity were not observed, for it was not required that noncultic activities be conducted in a state of Levitical cleanness.

But, as I said, the Pharisees held, to the contrary, that even outside

of the Temple, in one's own home, one had to follow the laws of ritual purity in the only circumstance in which they might apply, namely, at the table. They therefore held one must eat his secular food, that is, ordinary, everyday meals, in a state of ritual purity *as if one were a Temple priest*. The Pharisees thus arrogated to themselves—and to all Jews equally—the status of the Temple priests and did the things which priests must do on account of that status. The table of every Jew in his home was seen to be like the table of the Lord in the Jerusalem Temple. The commandment, “You shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy people,” was taken literally. The whole country was holy. The table of every man possessed the same order of sanctity as the table of the cult. But, at this time, only the Pharisees held such a viewpoint, and eating unconsecrated food as if one were a Temple priest at the Lord's table thus was one of the two significations that a Jew was a Pharisee, a sectarian.

The other was meticulous tithing. The laws of tithing and related agricultural taboos may have been kept primarily by Pharisees. Here we are not certain. Pharisees clearly regarded keeping the agricultural rules as a chief religious duty. But whether, to what degree, and how other Jews did so, is not clear. Both the agricultural laws and purity rules in the end affected table-fellowship: *How and what one may eat*. That is, they were “dietary laws.”

We see, therefore, that the Dead Sea Sect, the Christian Jews, and the Pharisees all stressed the eating of ritual meals. But while the Qumranians and the Christians tended to oppose sacrifice as such, and to prefer to achieve forgiveness of sin through ritual baths and communion meals, the Pharisees before 70 continued to revere the Temple and its cult, and afterward they drew up the laws which would govern the Temple when it would be restored. In the meantime, they held that (b. *Berakhot* 55a), “As long as the Temple stood, the altar atoned for Israel. But now a man's table atones for him.”

The Pharisees never opposed the Temple, though they were critical of the priesthood. While it stood, they seem to have accepted the efficacy of the cult for the atonement of sins, and in this regard, as in others, they were more loyal to what they took to be the literal meaning of Scripture. More radical groups moved far beyond that meaning, either through rejecting its continued validity, as in the Christian view, or through taking over the cult through their own commune, as in the Qumran view.

While the early Christians gathered for ritual meals, and made them the climax of their group life, the Pharisees apparently did not. What expressed the Pharisees' sense of self-awareness as a group apparently was not a similarly intense, ritual meal. Eating was not a ritualized occasion, even though the Pharisees had liturgies to be said at the meal. No com-

munion-ceremony, no rites centered on meals, no specification of meals on holy occasions, characterize Pharisaic table-fellowship.

Pharisaic table-fellowship thus was a quite ordinary, everyday affair. The various fellowship-rules had to be observed in a wholly routine circumstance—daily, at every meal, without accompanying rites, other than a benediction for the food. Unlike the Pharisees, the Christians' myths and rituals rendered table-fellowship into a much heightened spiritual experience: *Do these things in memory of me*. The Pharisees told no stories about purity laws, except (in later times) to account for their historical development (e.g., who had decreed which purity-rule?). When they came to table, so far as we know, they told no stories about how Moses had done what they now do, and they did not "do these things in memory of Moses our rabbi."

In the Dead Sea commune, table-fellowship was open upon much the same basis as among the Pharisees: appropriate undertakings to keep ritual purity and to consume properly grown and tithed foods. As we know it, the Qumranian meal was liturgically not much different from the ordinary Pharisaic gathering. The rites pertained to, and derived from, the eating of food and that alone.

The Dead Sea sect's meal would have had some similarity to the Christian Eucharist if it had included some sort of narrative about the Temple cult, stories about how the sect replicated the holy Temple and ate at the table of God, how the founder of the community had transferred the Temple's holiness out of unclean Jerusalem, how the present officiants stood in the place of the High Priest of Jerusalem, how the occasion called to mind some holy event of the past, and comparable tales. But we have no allusions to the inclusion of such mythic elements in the enactment of the community meal. Josephus's Essenes have a priest pray before the meal and afterward: "At the beginning and the end they do honor to God as the provider of life." This seems to me no different from the Pharisaic table-rite. The primary difference is the prominence of priests in the life of the group. The table-fellowship of Qumranians and Pharisees thus exhibits less of a ritual embodiment of sacred myth than does that of the early Christians.

On the other hand, both Christians and Pharisees lived among ordinary folk, while the Qumranians did not. In this respect the commonplace character of Pharisaic table-fellowship is all the more striking. The sect ordinarily did not gather *as a group* at all, but in the home. All meals required ritual purity. Pharisaic table-fellowship took place in the same circumstances as did all non-ritual table-fellowship: common folk ate everyday meals in an everyday way, among ordinary neighbors who were not members of the sect. They were engaged in workaday pursuits like everyone else. The setting for law-observance was the field and the kitchen, the bed and the street. The occasion for observance was set

every time a person picked up a common nail, which might be unclean, or purchased a *se'ah* of wheat, which had to be tithed—by himself, without priests to bless his deeds or sages to instruct them. Keeping the Pharisaic rule required neither an occasional exceptional rite at, but external to, the meal, as in the Christian sect, nor taking up residence in a monastic commune, as in the Qumranian sect in Judaism. Instead, it imposed the perpetual ritualization of daily life, on the one side, and the constant, inner awareness of the communal order of being, on the other.

The Pharisees after 70

The response of the Pharisees to the destruction of the Temple is known to us only from rabbinic materials, which underwent revisions over many centuries. A story about Yoḥanan ben Zakkai and his disciple, Joshua ben Ḥananiah, tells us in a few words the main outline of the Pharisaic-rabbinic view of the destruction:

Once, as Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai was coming forth from Jerusalem, Rabbi Joshua followed after him and beheld the Temple in ruins.

"Woe unto us," Rabbi Joshua cried, "that this, the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for, is laid waste!"

"My son," Rabban Yoḥanan said to him, "be not grieved. We have another atonement as effective as this. And what is it? It is acts of loving-kindness, as it is said, *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice* [Hos. 6:6] (*Avot de Rabbi Natan*, Chap. 6).

How shall we relate the arcane rules about ritual purity to the public calamity faced by the heirs of the Pharisees at Yavneh? What connection between the ritual purity of the "kingdom of priests" and the atonement of sins in the Temple?

To Yoḥanan ben Zakkai, preserving the Temple was not an end in itself. He taught that there was another means of reconciliation between God and Israel, so that the Temple and its cult were not decisive. What really counted in the life of the Jewish people? Torah, piety. (We should add, Torah as taught by the Pharisees and, later on, by the rabbis, their continuators.) For the zealots and messianists of the day, the answer was power, politics, the right to live under one's own rulers.

What was the will of God? It was doing deeds of loving-kindness: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Hos. 6:6) meant to Yoḥanan, "We have a means of atonement as effective as the Temple, and it is doing deeds of loving-kindness." Just as willingly as men would contribute bricks and mortar for the rebuilding of a sanctuary, so they ought to contribute renunciation, self-sacrifice, love, for the building of a sacred community. Earlier, Pharisaism had held that the Temple should be everywhere, even in the home and the hearth. Now Yoḥanan taught that sacrifice greater than the Temple's must characterize the life of the community. If one were to do something for God in a time when the Temple was

no more, the offering must be the gift of selfless compassion. The holy altar must be the streets and marketplaces of the world, as, formerly, the purity of the Temple had to be observed in the streets and marketplaces of Jerusalem. In a sense, therefore, by making the laws of ritual purity incumbent upon the ordinary Jew, the Pharisees already had effectively limited the importance of the Temple and its cult. The emergence of the *Bet HaMidrash* and *Bet HaKenesset* similarly transferred vital religious authority from the Temple priesthood to other sorts of religious leaders. The earlier history of the Pharisaic sect thus had laid the groundwork for Yoḥanan ben Zakkai's response to Joshua ben Ḥananiah. It was a natural conclusion for one nurtured in a movement based upon the priesthood of all Israel.

Why did Yoḥanan ben Zakkai come to such an interpretation of the meaning of the life of Israel, the Jewish people? Because he was a Pharisee, and the Pharisaic party had long ago reached that same conclusion. Though it had begun as a political party, not much different from other such groups in Maccabean times, toward the end of the Maccabean period the party faced the choice of remaining in politics and suffering annihilation, or giving up politics and continuing in a very different form. On the surface, the Pharisees' survival, the achievement of Hillel and his response to the challenge of Herod, tell us that the choice had been made to abandon politics. But that is not the whole answer.

The Pharisees determined to concentrate on what they believed was really important in politics, and that was the fulfillment of all the laws of the Torah, even ritual tithing, and the elevation of the life of the people, even at home and in the streets, to what the Torah had commanded: *You shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy people*. A kingdom in which everyone was a priest, a people all of whom were holy—a community which would live as if it were always in the Temple sanctuary of Jerusalem. Therefore, the purity laws, so complicated and inconvenient, were extended to the life of every Jew in his own home. The Temple altar in Jerusalem would be replicated at the table of all Israel. To be sure, only a small minority of the Jewish people, to begin with, obeyed the law as taught by the Pharisaic party. Therefore, the group had to reconsider the importance of political life, through which the law might everywhere be effected. The party which had abandoned politics for piety now had to recover access to the instruments of power for the sake of piety. It was the way toward realization of what was essentially not a political aspiration.

The Outcome

Of the four responses briefly outlined here, only the ones associated with the Christians and the Pharisees produced important historical consequences. The visionaries who lamented the past and hoped for near

redemption enjoyed considerable success in sharing their vision with other Jews. The result was the Bar Kokhba War, but no redemption followed; rather, severe repression for a time. Then the Pharisees' continuators, the rabbis led by the patriarch, gained complete control within the Jewish community of Palestine, and their program of attempting to make all Jews into priests, which to them meant into rabbis, was gradually effected.

The Qumran community did not survive the war, but its viewpoint seems to have persisted within the complex of Christian churches. For the Christians, the events of August, 70, were not difficult to explain. Jesus had earlier predicted that the Temple would be destroyed; the Jews' own words had convicted them, as Matthew, writing in the aftermath of 70, claims, "Our blood be upon our own heads." But the new Temple and the new cult would go forward. The picture is complex, involving Jesus, become Christ, or the Church, embodying the new Temple, but the outcome is clear. The events of 70 served to confirm the new faith, and the faith itself supplied a new set of images to take over and exploit the symbols of the old cult.

The destruction of the Temple, Jerusalem, and the cult therefore marked a considerable transformation in the antecedent symbolic structures of Judaism. The ancient symbols were emptied of their old meanings and filled with new ones; they continued formally unchanged but substantively in no way the same.

Conclusion

It remains to compare the experience of first-century Jews with that of Jews in our own time for, alas, both have endured difficult times. So far as both have had to confront a profound spiritual crisis, formulated in terms of the problem of evil, we may observe that the apocalyptic mind of the first century has a close counterpart in the theological and fictional writings about the Holocaust. Both dwell upon the disaster. Both lament it. Both ask how God could have done such a thing. Both look for a redemption in the near future, and the twentieth century apocalypics found the beginnings of redemption in the rise of the State of Israel, as, for a time, those in the second century probably regarded Bar Kokhba as a messianic figure. The destruction of the Temple posed cultic problems in no way faced by twentieth century Jews. But may one compare the evident necessity to reconstruct a basis for meaningful social life, faced in the first century, with that recognized by twentieth-century counterparts? Here matters are less clear. It may be argued that the Holocaust in an extreme form signified the disintegration of western society. Just as the ancient cult had assured folk of the permanence of the old values and the old society, so the persistence of Jewries in the several European societies may have meant, to Jews at least, the con-

tinuing viability of the liberal and democratic ideals of the Enlightenment, ideals which gave those societies teleological consequence and coherence. So the end of the several Jewries may likewise have signified the impossibility of the old hope of building a diverse but stable society. Then the effort to construct smaller, but better integrated social groups as communes and other discrete societies would be a counterpart to the salvific table-fellowship societies formed by Christian and Pharisaic Jews. I tend to be dubious of such comparisons; they ignore too many variables and rely too much upon inflated rhetoric in place of sound data and hard facts. To be sure, one cannot ignore certain obvious resemblances, but what one should make of them is not clear. Obviously, the first century was, and the twentieth is, a time of great flux. In both, the old order came to a decisive conclusion. Both have witnessed the birth of new religions of various sorts, the reorganization of world politics, and other changes of immense, and, for our times, unfathomable consequence. Perhaps, if lessons must be drawn from one age for another, the lesson of both the Pharisaic Jews and the Christian Jews—the two groups that emerged from pre-70 times and survived the disaster of 70—is this: Not to let slip from one's grasp the ties to the past, but also not to be knotted in them. Both groups preserved the Temple, each in its strange way. But for both, the Temple endured in a form which no one, before the destruction, could have recognized.

Structure and Spontaneity in Prayer

STEVEN RISKIN

PRAYER, AS EXPRESSED BY CLASSICAL JEWISH tradition, is one of the most paradoxical of our religious experiences. On the one hand, it is generally regarded as "service of the heart." As such, the individual should have the option to communicate with his God—whenever, however and wherever he may choose to do so. In the words of the Psalmist, "The Lord is near unto all who call upon Him."¹ Yet, on the other hand, the order of prayer and the precise words to be verbalized have been so minutely detailed by Jewish law that the individual often feels denied the opportunity of personal communication with his God in his own way. The halakhic structure of prayer serves to inhibit its human spontaneity. It is the purpose of this essay to outline the rabbinic approach to prayer and, thereby, attempt to establish a bridge between the structure and the spontaneity.

Maimonides sees the relationship between the spontaneity and structure in purely historical terms:

They have been taught from tradition that "service" is prayer, as it is written "And thou shalt serve Him with all thy heart."

Our Sages maintain: "What is a service of the heart? This is prayer." And since prayer is essentially a spontaneous song from the heart of the Jew, Maimonides consistently continues:

There is no fixed number of prayers from the Torah. There is no fixed formula of prayers from the Torah, there is no set time for prayer from the Torah.²

It was historical necessity which created the need for the structure:

Since the Jews were exiled during the days of Nebuchadnezzar the Evil one, and they were dispersed to Persia, Greece and the other nations, and children were born to them in Gentile lands, these children confused their languages. . . . When they would speak, they were unable to articulate completely in one language. . . . When Ezra and his Court perceived this, they instituted the Eighteen Benedictions in a specific order . . . so that the prayer would be uniformly arranged for everyone . . . and the prayer of the inarticulate would be as complete a prayer as that of the linguist.³

Maimonides, therefore, understood the development of a structural prayer as a means of unifying and democratizing a dispersed Jewish people bereft of a *lingua franca*. In conceptual terms, a uniform prayer would

1. Psalms 145:18.

2. Maimonides, *Mishnah Torah*, "Hilkhot T'filah," 1:1.

3. *Ibid.*

demonstrate that every Jew is equal before God.⁴ But despite the possible validity of Maimonides' historical explanation, the structure of prayer does often serve to curtail its spontaneity.

I would suggest an alternate approach to the problem. The opening words of the *amidah*, prayer par excellence, is: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God and God of our fathers." The Jew stands before the Divine Presence addressing himself to his God, not only as an individual ("our God") but also as a member of the historic community of Israel ("God of our fathers"). He approaches God from within the context of his personal aspirations, frustrations and emotions, as well as from within the framework of an ancient people inspired by the God Who revealed Himself to his forefathers. Herein lies the key to the paradox of prayer. Insofar as the Jew addresses himself to the personal God of his experience, prayer is the spontaneous service of the heart. Insofar as the Jew addresses himself to the historic God of Israel, prayer is the structured product of Jewish law. And since the Jew must always be cognizant of his status, both as an individual and as a member of an eternal nation, the structure and spontaneity of prayer must dwell together within his religious expression. It is my contention that the Sages of the Talmud were aware of this necessary tension between structure and spontaneity, and insisted upon maintaining both aspects in their legislation.

The Talmud records an interesting difference of opinion as to the origin of our obligation to pray a specific number of times each day:

R. Jose son of R. Hanina says: "Prayers were instituted by the Patriarchs. R. Joshua b. Levi says: "Prayers were instituted corresponding with the daily sacrifices."⁵

Logically, it would seem that if we maintain that the daily prayers were initially established by the Patriarchs as a reaction to specific events in their lives, then the spontaneity of prayer assumes preeminence. If, on the other hand, we maintain that the prayers were initially established to correspond with the sacrifices, then the structure of prayer assumes preeminence. And this analysis is supported by the following discussion in the Talmud:

The question was raised: If a man erred and did not say the afternoon prayer, should he say it twice in the evening? Should you argue from the fact that if he erred in the evening he prays twice in the morning (I may reply that) this is because it is all one day, as it is written "And there was evening and there was morning one day;" but in this case, prayer being in the place of sacrifice, since the day has passed, the sacrifice

4. *Ibid.*

5. B. T. Berakhot, 17a. A pearl in the mouths of the Rabbis of Yavneh was: "I am God's creature and my fellow is God's creature. My work is in the town and his work is in the country. I rise early for my work and he rises early for his work. Will you say I do much and he does little? We have learnt: one may do much or one may do little; it is all one, provided he directs his heart to heaven."

lapses. Or should we rather say that since prayer is (spontaneous) supplication for mercy, a man may pray wherever (and for how long) he likes?⁶

The resolution of the conflict posed by the Rabbis of the Talmud depends upon the essential nature of prayer. If its essence is man's spontaneous desire to communicate with God, then the individual must not be circumscribed by fixed boundaries of time and may pray twice in the evening. If prayer is essentially a sacrificial act, binding the individual to historic Israel, then the individual must be bound to a specific pattern and structure. Ultimately, the law resolves this particular question in favor of spontaneity, but refuses to relinquish entirely the aspect of structure: "The Prayers were established by the Patriarchs, but the Rabbis appended them to the Sacrifices."⁷ Structure and spontaneity must dwell together.

Undoubtedly, these two aspects of prayer cannot stand together without conflict and tension. A set pattern of prayer makes it all too easy for the individual to pray by mechanical code, giving the Almighty His due without involving his own emotions and feelings. In order to prevent this eventuality, the Mishnah declares, in the name of Rabbi Eliezer: "If a man makes his prayer fixed, it is not a (genuine) supplication."⁸ And the Gemara interprets:

What (is meant by the term) fixed? Rabbi Jacob b. Idi says in the name of R. Oshaiah: He whose prayer seems to him to be a burden.

The Rabbis say: Whoever does not recite his prayer in the manner of supplication.

Rabbah and R. Joseph say together: Whoever does not add something new to his prayer.⁹

In accordance with this notion of one's responsibility to make of his prayer an act of individual encounter with the Deity, many of the Amoraim were accustomed to add their own personal prayer at the conclusion of the *amidah*.¹⁰ It is a sad commentary on our own lack of religious fervor that one such individual prayer—*Elokey nezor*—has become fixed within the order of prayers, and rarely stands as it should as the example of personal creativity. It is permissible—and even desirable—that the individual add personal requests within each of the beseeching paragraphs of the *amidah*:

R. Judah the son of Samuel b. Shilat said in the name of Rav: Although it was said that a man requests his personal necessities in (the blessing) *Shomea t'filah*, if he is disposed to recite them at the end of each blessing (of the *amidah*) by personal supplication in accordance with the subject of each blessing, he may so recite.¹¹

6. B. T. Berakhot 26b.

7. *Ibid.*, 26a.

8. *Ibid.*, 26c.

9. Mishnah Berakhot, 4,3.

10. B. T. Berakhot, 296.

11. *Ibid.*, 166, 17a.

And in urging support of the individual's right to express his particular mood of prayer,

R. Joshua b. Levi says: Although it has been said that a man requests his personal necessities in (the blessing) *Shomea t'filah*, if he is disposed to recite the entire order of the Day of Atonement at the conclusion of his prayer, he may do so.¹²

It is clear from these statements that our Sages viewed the structured order of prayers as providing the individual with the proper framework within which to add his own personal ones in accordance with his needs and emotions. The Prayer Book was not meant to exhaust but, rather, to inspire prayer.

I would further suggest that within the context of our accustomed public prayer, with the private *amidah* followed by the congregational repetition of it, that there is an opportunity for the expression of both the spontaneous and structured aspects of prayer. The Mishnah teaches:

Just as the representative of the congregation (*shliach zibbur*) must recite the *amidah* aloud, so must every individual recite the *amidah* aloud.¹³

And even Rabbi Gamaliel, who maintains that "the representative of the congregation can absolve the multitude of its obligation," is speaking only of those who are working in the fields and have not the time to pray, themselves, according to the conclusion of the Talmud.¹⁴ Thus, under ordinary circumstances, there is the halakhic requirement of two *amidot*, one private and one public. And these two *amidot* may be similar in structure and content, but they are not identical. An individual may recite a personal, private *amidah* at will (*t'filat nedavah*), but the congregational, public *amidah* is limited to thrice daily at the prayer times. The priestly benediction and *kedushah* are limited to the public *amidah*, and the confessional on the Day of Atonement is included in the central blessing of the public *amidah*, while it is relegated to the conclusion of the private *amidah*.¹⁵

These differences would suggest that the two *amidot* represent two separate aspects of prayer: The private one expresses spontaneity while the public one expresses structure. In the private *amidah* it is primarily the individual who stands before God, albeit an individual who is deeply concerned for the well-being of every Jew and links his personal aspirations with those of his co-religionists. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon him to depart from the structured text in order to make of his Divine Dialogue a living personal experience. With the repetition of the *amidah*, the individual members of the congregation join in recognition of historic commitment to an ideal which is so movingly expressed in our

12. Avodah Zarah, 76, *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim*, 119,1.

13. B. T. Berakhot, 8a.

14. Mishnah, Rosh Hashanah, 4, 10.

15. B. T., Rosh Hashanah, 35.

prayer book. The *shliaḥ zibbur* dare not depart from the structured text, since he symbolizes united Israel standing before his God.

Unfortunately, in most instances, modern man finds it difficult to escape his inhibitions and speak honestly with God. Most of our prayer is an arid, mechanical statement of words, devoid of the spontaneous expression desired by our Sages. Certainly a generation such as ours, which has moved from the bleak despair of the wanton destruction of one-third of our people to the dizzying heights of the pride of the liberation of the Western Wall, has the power to unleash a creativity in prayer which should rival the *piyyut* and elegy of the Middle Ages. Israel Independence Day and *Yom Yerushalayim* should provide the structure of personal prayers which will eventually be adopted by all of Israel as new ceremonies and festivals begin to evolve. Perhaps all of our existing prayers and ceremonies must be touched by the shadow and promise of Auschwitz and Jerusalem.

It is to be hoped that we will enter into a new phase of creative prayer which will testify to a vital religious experience. Rav J. B. Soloveitchick has often remarked that prayer and prophecy are two sides of the same coin, except that prayer is initiated by man and prophecy is initiated by God.¹⁶ Perhaps if we learn to revive the former properly it may lead to the development of the latter.

16. Rav. J. B. Soloveitchick has explained that the *shliaḥ zibbur* speaks with the authority of the entire nation, and has, thereby, the right to demand forgiveness of God in accordance with the Biblical promise. The individual comes with no such authority, and reserves his plea for forgiveness for the conclusion of his prayer.

Tolstoy and the Beginnings of Kibbutz Ideology

MARTIN SLANN

IT IS ONE OF THE HISTORICAL AND LITERARY ironies of the late nineteenth-century Jewish Socialist movement that an important philosophical precursor of the kibbutz ideology did not consciously identify himself with either the movement or the ideology. Leo Tolstoy, of course, was not Jewish, but this essay is intended to demonstrate that his philosophy contained a number of ingredients of the kibbutz movement.

By the time the Zionist program had been formally activated by Herzl and the First Zionist Congress in 1897, Tolstoy was already approaching seventy years of age and had written most of his more important treatises on social reform. He passed away in 1910, only one year after the founding of the first kibbutz, Degania. Yet it was in Tolstoyan philosophy that the first kibbutzniks found much of their original inspiration. It is not impossible to approximate the measure of this influence, but it is difficult because it was so accidental.

Tolstoy's influence, was, to be sure, an incomplete one. There were similar strains of thought between his interpretation of primitive pacifist Christianity and the kibbutznik's Jewish socialism. The common emphases on hard work outdoors, the denial of material luxuries even when they could be afforded, the contempt for the pretentious sophistication of all social elites—these values, as well as the insistence on almost total egalitarianism, were all indicative of what Tolstoyans and kibbutzniks considered to be the just society. Tolstoy, however, never intended his writings for Jews in particular and, in fact, demonstrated an extreme lack of concern for those millions of Jews in Russia whose existence had remained precarious for generations. Only toward the end of his career did he indicate his public sympathy for Jewish victims of pogroms,¹ but by then it was too late, for the Russian Jewish intellectual community had either, like Trotsky, renounced Judaism for Marxism or, like Ben-Gurion, renounced Russia for a Jewish homeland.²

1. See Tolstoy's "I Cannot Keep Silent," *Arena*, 41 (August, 1909), pp. 525-534. Most of the nineteenth century anarchist and socialist thinkers, according to J. L. Talmon, were anti-Semitic, while a substantial minority were philo-Semitic. [See his *Israel Among the Nations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1970), pp. 3-17.] Tolstoy's general lack of interest in the Russian pogroms disappointed many of his Jewish admirers, but he was definitely no anti-Semite.

2. The incisive discussion by Amos Elon in his penetrating work, *The Israelis: Founders and Sons* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), maintains that the decision of the Jews of the Second Aliyah to migrate to Palestine represented only one section of

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I

The kibbutz society reflects Tolstoy's emphasis upon the virtues of the ideal, rural life-style. By the end of the 19th century, no more than 20 per cent of the Russian population lived in urban areas, but Tolstoy already feared that oncoming industrialization would destroy those uncorrupted qualities that only a clean rural environment provided. This concept was not lost upon the early kibbutzniks. Most of them, indeed, came from urban Russia and sought to escape from the congested ghetto to which they had been restricted for centuries; these settlers were also convinced that freedom of action was easily circumvented in a closed, urban society.

There is a corollary to this notion of rural freedom: Tolstoy did not specifically emphasize the abbreviated community, but he surely had in mind the model of thousands of Russian villages in which his ideal *muzhik* lived, the communal *mir*. It is only in such a community that his ideal of self-sufficiency had potential. There is no kibbutz in contemporary Israel that contains a population of over 2500 and most of the present 240 kibbutzim still count less than 1,000 residents each.

A second point is the common de-emphasis of money. For Tolstoy, as with kibbutzniks, hard work was its own reward, consistent with the Tolstoyan scheme that material wealth is to be shunned as a corrupting influence. Alan Arian points out that one of the fundamental principles of kibbutz ideology is that "Society is established without any differences in privilege of material possessions,"³ or, in other words, there is an insistence upon "actual equality" rather than the formal equality that most democratic regimes promise.

Thirdly, the emphasis on physical work insofar as one's age and capacity allows is a Tolstoyan concomitant of the kibbutz ideology. A generation before the creation of Degania, Tolstoy had written that, after examining the pretentiousness of his own aristocratic existence

I came to the following simple conclusion, that, in order to avoid causing the sufferings and depravity of men, I ought to make other men work for me as little as possible, and to work myself as much as possible.⁴

The early kibbutz injunction against hiring outside labor for wages is a reflective parallel of Tolstoy's attitude that no one is above work.

Jewish political and religious thought in Russia before 1917. Others were determined that the humanitarian aspects of Marxism supplanted Zionism. The last half century of Soviet history suggests that the Zionist Jews were correct in believing that Jewish salvation could be based only upon the foundation of a Jewish state. Even more successfully than the Jewish Marxists who remained in Russia, the Zionists acted on Marx's insistence that it was necessary not only to know an evil reality, but to change it as well.

3. Alan Arian, *Ideological Change in Israel* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1968), p. 99.

4. Leo Tolstoy, *What Is to Be Done?*, p. 141. Quotations from Tolstoy are from his *Complete Works* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1899) unless otherwise indicated.

As Arian has pointed out, the collective ideology of the kibbutz implies the precedence of the group over the individual.⁵ Tolstoy, however, concentrates his argument on how isolated the individual is in society, and recommends that

A man need only admit that his life consists in a striving after the good of other(s) . . . and the torture of personal suffering will be replaced by a feeling of sympathy for others.⁶

Two-thirds of a century later a veteran kibbutznik would issue a remarkably supplementary statement to Tolstoy's:

In the kibbutz, a man is not less, but more, of a man because he is an active, responsible member of an in-group with which he interacts, contributing his own resources to it and deriving from it social sustenance.⁷

The intention to apply this attitude universally could mean the development of a new culture.⁸ Tolstoy must have thought so, for he certainly hinted as much in *What Is Art?*, in which he points out the obsession many artists have with "The life of our wealthy people, with their love affairs and dissatisfaction with themselves. . ."⁹ For Tolstoy, history has had an unjustified preoccupation with the wrong class, the leisure class.

II

The kibbutz has often been designated as "the apex of modern Israeli democracy"¹⁰ and as an example of the best life, not only to Israelis but to all of mankind.¹¹ Tolstoy understood a similar approach to man's redemption which was to be found in man's physical source: the soil. In *What Is to Be Done?* he had written

Who am I that desire to better man's condition? I desire it; and yet I get up at noon, after having played at cards in a brightly lighted saloon during all the previous night. . . I come to help them!—these men who rise

5. This principle, basically stated, is: "Man's character is formed by his society and society thus stands above the individual." Arian, *Ideological Change in Israel*, p. 99.

6. Tolstoy, *Life*, p. 357.

7. Avraham Ben-Yosef, *The Purest Democracy in the World* (New York: Herzl Press, 1963), p. 57.

8. That the kibbutz exemplifies a new kind of political culture is practically self-evident, if only because of the failure of so many other attempts at collective societies. The concept that democracy works best in a small community is nowhere better suggested than in the kibbutz policy of alternating work roles. In this sense, washing dishes in the kitchen has as much dignity as hoeing weeds in a peanut field. It is the sharing of the dignity of work that produces the reality of equality in the kibbutz.

9. Tolstoy, *What Is Art?*, pp. 408-409.

10. Ben-Yosef, *The Purest Democracy in the World*, p. 7.

11. Arian, *Ideological Change in Israel*, p. 99. The kibbutz ideal, though practiced by less than 4 per cent of Israel's population, is still taken seriously by those officials who represent national ideology. A former Israeli cabinet official and head of the Histadrut states unequivocally that, in Israel, "It is a workingman's society. The only basis for its existence is work and more work!" Itzhak Ben-Aharon, "The Just Society in Israel," *Jewish Frontier*, XXXVI, No. 6 (June, 1969), p. 7.

at five, sleep on boards, feed upon cabbage and bread, understand how to plough, to reap, to put a handle to an axe, to write, to harness horses, to sew; men who, by their strength and perseverance and self-restraint, are a hundred times stronger than I who come to help them. . .¹²

Humanity could retire to the soil, Tolstoy felt, without the coercion or even the guidance of the state. Indeed, the early kibbutzniks did just that and their only encouragement was the personal morale each gave to the others. It should be noted that a formal state apparatus developed only after the kibbutz movement was already four decades old. Unlike Tolstoy, the kibbutzniks did not reject the state outright; and since the kibbutzim furnished so much of Israel's political leadership, as well as ideology, Tolstoy's form of anarchism was totally unsuitable.

This Tolstoyan anarchism is of a very subtle variety. Nowhere in his writings does he actually admit to being an anarchist, but since his anarchism was of a religious and spiritual quality he naturally avoided political labels. Instead, he concentrated on being a moralist. Consistent with his landed aristocratic background, he inevitably discovered his dislike of cities. In 1881, he noted in his diary that in Moscow there is

Stench, stone, opulence, poverty, debauchery. The robbers have banded together and despoiled the people, assembled an army, elected judges to sanction their orgies, and now they are feasting.¹³

At several junctures in his life, and most especially as he grew older, Tolstoy renounced his own life as unexemplary. In a conversation with one of his admirers, he lamented that

I have it always on my conscience that I, with my wish to renounce property, once bought estates. It is funny to think that it seems now as if I had wished to make provision for my children, and in doing so I did the greatest injury. Look at my Andryusha. He is completely incapable of doing anything, and lives on the people whom I once robbed and whom my children keep on robbing.¹⁴

While Tolstoy's views caused severe familial strife, his influence on others, while unintentional, was great. The individual whose name is most closely associated with the Tolstoyan tradition in Israeli kibbutzim is, of course, Aaron David Gordon, "the Jewish Tolstoy."¹⁵ For Gordon, Tolstoy's "self-work" became a "religion of labor."¹⁶ Stoic commitment

12. Quoted in G. H. Perris, ed., *The Life and Teaching of Leo Tolstoy* (London: Grant Richards, 1901), p. 120.

13. Quoted in Henri Troyat, *Tolstoy* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), 417. Trans. by Nancy Amphoux. Troyat's biography of Tolstoy is probably the most comprehensive yet published.

14. A. B. Goldenweizer, *Talks with Tolstoy* (New York: Horizon Press, 1969), pp. 81-82. Andryusha is Andrei Lvovich (1877-1916), one of Tolstoy's children who completely repudiated his father's philosophy of simple living and self-work.

15. Myron Fenster, "Israel and the Jewish People," in Benjamin Efron, ed., *Currents and Trends in Contemporary Jewish Thought* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1965), p. 11.

16. Amos Perlmutter, *Anatomy of Political Institutionalization: The Case of Israel and Some Comparative Analyses* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Center for International Affairs, 1970), p. 11.

to devotion to service and work is apparent in the writings of each man. Like Tolstoy, Gordon could predict that "work will heal us,"¹⁷ intending the advice in a spiritual as well as in a physical context. What Tolstoy had tried to do for Christianity, Gordon attempted to do for Judaism, and for their efforts Tolstoy was excommunicated by the Orthodox church and Gordon found himself opposed by a son who considered his father to be an irreligious Jew.

Tolstoy provided an intellectual stimulus which Gordon could pursue as a reality. Tolstoy had envisioned all of Russia and, eventually, all of mankind returning to the soil, eliminating class exploitation of class, and affiliating with an unostentatious life style. Yet, only a few months before his death, Tolstoy speculated that "We live an insane life and know in the depths of our hearts that we live insanely, but we keep on by habit and inertia, and we either do not want, or cannot change it, or both."¹⁸

Gordon, who left Russia for Palestine in 1904 at the beginning of the Second Aliyah, was one who did not experience such disillusionment. Arian's consideration of the most representative elements of kibbutz ideology includes most of Gordon's own precepts; for example, "The realization of the principles of the [entire] kibbutz ideology must take place within an agricultural framework" and "There is complete mutual responsibility according to the principle 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.'"¹⁹ The universality of these principles has a Tolstoyan quality, but they assumed this quality only through Gordon and other early aliyah figures such as Meir Yaari and Ber Borochov who were steeped in the works of Tolstoy as well as of Marx.

III

Tolstoy's teachings were completely rejected by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and his followers became neither Russian nor Christian. Gordon's religion of labor in Palestine and Gandhi's passive disobedience modified Tolstoy's idealism and, in practical terms, each man's program was more successful than Tolstoy's.

It is likely that Gordon's colleagues in the kibbutz movement and, for that matter, throughout the Yishuv, would have followed their own doctrine of the Jewish prohibition of shedding blood.²⁰ The kibbutzniks

17. *Ibid.*, p. 10. For a personal description of Gordon's theory and practice, see his work, *Selected Essays* (Jerusalem: League for Labor, 1938); a concise summary of Gordon's influence on early and later kibbutzniks is found in Ronald Sanders, "The Legacy of A. D. Gordon," *Commentary*, 39, No. 4 (April, 1965), 74-76.

18. Leon Stillman, ed., *Leo Tolstoy: Last Diaries* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1960), p. 134.

19. Arian, *Ideological Change in Israel*, p. 99.

20. Talmon notes that, despite the armed uprising of Arabs in 1936, "So strong were the liberal and pacific instincts of the Yishuv that even at that late date the leadership

could easily agree on the necessity of self-work, but it was on the matter of pacifism that they were forced to depart from Tolstoy.

Kibbutzniks led in the adoption by the Yishuv of the concept of *haganah azmit*—self-defense. Those Palestine Jews who, like Gordon, were well versed in Tolstoy, found themselves confronted with a situation that Tolstoy had refused to consider, the virtual necessity of creating a new homeland. To do so in a hostile environment would have been impossible if Tolstoy's ideal of pacifism were adhered to.

The policy of *haganah azmit* suggests a concern with this world, while Tolstoy assumed that the next world was the most important one to prepare for. Yet, for the Jews, this philosophy meant their continuation in this world as the perennial victims in non-Jewish society. The Yishuv, in particular, found it impossible to reconcile the values of self-work with self-sacrifice if the latter, in effect, meant Jewish annihilation. Instead, the kibbutzniks who formed the bulk of Yishuv leadership, idealized individual sacrifice when it was constructive for group welfare.

It would have been inconsistent for Tolstoy to direct any specific message to Jews because he wrote, as he thought, for all mankind. He belonged to the ranks of those socialist and anarchist thinkers whose programs did not distinguish between Jews and Gentiles.²¹ Nevertheless, it was left to those predominantly Russian Jews who emigrated to Palestine to create, in the form of the kibbutz, the selfless society which Tolstoy had envisioned. In doing so, however, they went far beyond him. The early kibbutzniks also succeeded in laying the foundation for an independent, self-reliant, and self-sufficient nation. The Yishuv's ideological emphasis upon the Jewish place in this world was best exemplified by the kibbutz, a testament to a life style intended to become universal.

was able to proclaim and for a long time maintain a policy of no retaliation." Talmon, *Israel Among the Nations*, p. 150.

21. The kibbutz ideology, while extolling Israel as the Jewish homeland, also insists that "kibbutz values should be accepted as the values of all mankind." Arian, *Ideological Change in Israel*, p. 99. The Jewish kibbutz, in this context, becomes an example of the selfless society that should be universally emulated.

A Post-Modern Sense of the Miraculous

JORDAN OFSEYER

IN THESE PAGES I WILL PROPOSE A RELIGIO-scientific-conceptual framework, in which a “post-modern sense of the miraculous” will be described and analyzed. This analysis will attempt to delineate the changing attitudes toward miracle, as well as the response to the world which I call a “sense of the miraculous.” The analysis will be carried through clearly definable periods of intellectual history, with the Biblical-through-medieval periods considered as stage one, the pre-modern period as stage two, and the post-modern period as stage three.

During the first stage, which came to a close by the end of the 16th century, miracle was understood as an event or act which went against the normally anticipated pattern of life. At that time, no clear distinction was drawn between a miraculous occurrence of the “natural” order, or of the “social” order. Miracles of the natural order were explained in one of two ways; as a suspension, by God, of natural laws, or as being within the natural order and not contrary to it.

According to the first interpretation, a miracle was an event which could in no way be explained as being within, or a part of, the natural order. Rather, its very essence was the suspending or contravening of natural law, or laws, by God. The ascent of Elijah to heaven in a fiery chariot (II Kings 2:11–12) is a characteristic Biblical example. The second interpretation suggests that the essence of miracles lies in its timing and purpose, not in the suspension of laws of nature; that it is the utilization by God of the ongoing processes of nature in such a way as to be seen by the believer as the redeeming hand of God. The parting of the Sea of Reeds (Ex. 14:15–31) may be thus interpreted.

In the social order, an event contrary to what could reasonably be expected to occur, such as the victory of the Maccabees over the Syro-Greeks, was also conceived of as miracle. However, in the popular mind, the most salient characteristic of miracle has always been the suspension of a law of nature. For this reason, and for the purposes of this paper, I shall consider only that category of miracle.

During the Biblical period, people believed in a wide range of miraculous events and the Bible abounds with examples.¹ In Rabbinic literature, miracles were, if anything, even more common. From a reading of

1. I Kings 17:10–16; I Kings 18:30–39; II Kings 1:1–14; II Kings 2:19–21; II Kings 6:1–7.

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the sources it is clear that these were accepted as part of the range of events to be anticipated with some frequency. They were, indeed, so much a part of the fabric of life that Montefiore and Loewe observe that "because miracles were so common, the Rabbis were not particularly impressed by them."²

During the medieval period, miracles were accepted essentially as they had been during the Biblical and Rabbinic periods, in spite of the inclination of the medieval mind to impose its own philosophic systems upon the basically "religio-poetic" Biblical and Rabbinic material. Nonetheless, the underlying similarity in world view of these pre-scientific periods did not allow for basic differences among the Biblical, Rabbinic and medieval attitudes towards miracle.³

During this entire pre-modern stage, however defined, the ultimate, if not immediate, cause of the miracle was believed to be God, Who was personally concerned for the fate of His chosen people. The miracle occurred at a time of distress to an individual, or to a group of Israelites, while the essence of the miraculous event was seen as saving the Israelites involved from the evil intent of their enemies. This divine intervention in the affairs of man was accepted as evidence of God's imminence and of His committed and concerned direction of the destiny of His people.

Together with this abiding belief in miracle, pre-modern man possessed a strong, clearly articulated, and oft expressed "sense of the miraculous." This term is used to denote the response of awe and wonder at the continuing, ever-renewing marvel and mystery of life and world. This quality of mind and heart was an integral, natural and important dimension of man's inner world and, as would be expected, numerous expressions of it are to be found in Biblical literature. For example:

"Lift up your eyes on high and see, who created these"⁴

"Who doeth great things and unsearchable marvelous things without number"⁵

Thus, the sense of the miraculous is a response to the wonder of the continuous processes observed in nature, as opposed to miracle itself understood as an act abrogating a law of nature. Miracle describes an act, while a sense of the miraculous describes a response. The pre-scientific mind of stage one was oriented both to accept miracle and to respond with the sense of the miraculous. It may be suggested that these were, in a way, mutually reinforcing, and remained so until the outset of the modern age.

The widespread belief in miracle was sustained intact for so many

2. C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (Philadelphia: J. P. S., 1960), p. 340.

3. Julius Gutman, *Philosophies of Judaism* (New York: Holt, 1964), pp. 77, 142, 170, 218, 231, 254.

4. Isaiah 40:26.

5. Job 5:9.

centuries because the *Weltanschauung* which served as its basic presupposition was not seriously challenged. It was not until the 17th century that this long-accepted and tenaciously held view of miracle came under attack and began to crumble, for all but the most insular fundamentalists, as a consequence of the application of emerging science to Biblical scholarship and theology. Similarly, as will be indicated, the sense of the miraculous was all but destroyed in the process.

What came to be known as the modern world view gained acceptance by the 18th century, and was developed and further refined in the 19th. This new view, which had long been accepted before the turn of our century, seemed to preclude the possibility of retaining a sense of the miraculous, let alone a belief in miracles per se. Basic to this new world view was the postulating of a mechanistic universe to explain why things are as they appear to be in the physical world.

A paradigmatic summation of this outlook was given by the French mathematician, Laplace, when he wrote, at the beginning of the 19th century,

We ought then to regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its anterior state and as the cause of the one which is to follow. Given for one instant an intelligence which could comprehend all the forces by which nature is animated and the retrospective situation of the beings who compose it—an intelligence sufficiently vast to submit these data to analysis—it would embrace in the same formula the movements of the greatest bodies of the universe and those of the lightest atom; for it, nothing would be uncertain and the future, as the past, would be present to its eyes.⁶

The last sentence is the key for properly understanding the modern world view. "For it, nothing would be uncertain and the future, as the past, would be present to its eyes." Stated in these unmistakably clear terms, this view claimed that, given an intelligence which could gather all the information required to know and predict everything about the forces of nature (implying that such information is at least theoretically available), for such an intelligence there would no longer be any unknown in nature. There would then be no uncertainty, no mystery, no unpredictable result and, thus, no miracle or sense of the miraculous.

In this view, the universe—being no more than a huge machine—when understood completely, would be completely predictable, from the movements of "the greatest bodies of the universe" to those of "the lightest atoms." These wide-ranging categories were intended to include the thoughts and actions of men (who were understood to be but a part of the grand universal machine) as well as complete mastery over all physical processes.

Although it was freely acknowledged by the mechanists that they

6. James R. Newman, *The World of Mathematics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956), p. 1047.

did not possess complete enough information to enable them to predict the course of natural occurrences and human life as claimed at that time, they believed that the theoretical capacity existed to acquire such data. There was, obviously, no question in their minds but that they would be able to do so at some time in the future.

This view of the world implied a continual narrowing of those areas which were as yet unavailable to human understanding. The unknown was simply in the process of gradual elimination. Each day, more and more elements of the vast universal machine were revealing themselves. The theoretically limited mystery (limited by the finite complexity of the universal machine) was losing ever more elements from its domain as the mysterious. In fact, the mysterious was no longer seen as an aspect of an unknowable category at all, but, more precisely, as part of chartable, though as yet uncharted, territory.

What followed from the general acceptance of this view was that the miracles of the Bible and, more important for our purposes, the deeply religious sense of the miraculous was rejected, and even became an object of ridicule in the face of all-knowing scientism. For if the universe was but a huge machine, the processes or laws of which were completely subject to the dictates of its predetermined patterns, where could there be room for a God who was previously believed to be able to abrogate these laws at will? An inflexible determinism was the inevitable direct result of this mechanistic view. It was a mechanism which, through its attitude of negating the possibility of variety and change in the universe, also destroyed the sense of the miraculous. More specifically, the basic conceptualization regarding the universe became the belief in its apparent and, more important even, its ultimate predictability. This widely accepted mode of thinking was instrumental in developing an attitude of mind that was antithetical to awe, mystery, and the sense of the miraculous.

For modern man there was no longer any theoretical unknown eternally unavailable to man's understanding and, in the same sense, to man's ultimate control. The so-called "naive" qualities of mind and heart of traditional religion were rejected. The dominant attitude, of which Laplace was but one representative, implied that "with the unlimited knowledge opening to man, we can and will know all." This attitude and world view could be seen in every area of human thought and endeavor. It was, I would suggest, a basic, though no doubt inarticulated, presupposition of the Higher Criticism of the German school of the last century.

In the first two and one half decades of this century, certain revolutionary discoveries were made about our universe which shook and finally toppled the previously accepted and long secure conceptual structure of a mechanistically conceived universe. As Lincoln Barnett wrote

Modern science was born when Galileo began trying to explain how things happen and thus originated the method of controlled experiment which now forms the basis of scientific investigation. Out of Galileo's discoveries and those of Newton in the next generation there evolved a mechanical universe of forces, pressures, tensions, oscillations and waves. There seemed to be no process of nature which could not be described in terms of ordinary experience, illustrated by a concrete model or predicted by Newton's amazingly accurate laws of mechanics. But before the turn of the past century certain deviations from these laws became apparent; and though these deviations were slight, they were of such a fundamental nature that the whole edifice of Newton's machine-like universe began to topple. The certainty that science can explain how things happen began to dim about twenty (that is, more than forty years ago, since this book was written in 1948—*J.O.*) years ago. And right now it is a question whether scientific man is in touch with "reality" at all—or can ever hope to be.⁷

One or two basic examples of what we might term the model of the post-modern universe as presently conceived will serve as elaborations of the nature and force of the revolution referred to above. An essential aspect of the post-modern paradigm is the famous Heisenberg uncertainty principle which was first worked out in a paper by a German physicist and published in 1927. It

concerns the accuracy with which certain physical quantities can be measured, the theoretical, not merely the practical limits of precision. It had been long supposed that the precision of measurements was limited only by the instruments and methods used, and that as these were improved, a corresponding improvement in accuracy would result—within limit. Heisenberg showed that this faith in the perfectability of measurement was unjustified as regards observation of very small particles. The very act of observing the position and the velocity of an electron interferes with it sufficiently to produce errors of measurement. It turns out that the more sharply one specifies the position of a particle, the less sharply can its velocity or momentum be determined, and vice versa.⁸

The implications of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, when properly appreciated in the scientific community, succeeded in shattering the basic presupposition of the mechanistic world view. The claim of Laplace and the mechanists that "nothing would be uncertain and the future, as the past, would be present to its eyes" was shown to be clearly unrealizable, even in theory. Heisenberg's principle demonstrated that, even with the most sensitive and highly sophisticated instruments, there would always remain a vast microcosm of sub-nuclear events which could never be completely understood or predicted by man. A doubt was now raised as to whether or not what we perceived, mediated by our limited faculties and understanding is, in fact, in any real sense, a true reflection of reality at all.

The eminent physicist, Niels Bohr, was among the first to recognize the revolutionary implications of the uncertainty principle. He conceived

7. Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* (New York: Harper, 1948), pp. 15-16.

8. Newman, *Op. cit.*, p. 1048.

an elaboration of it which he called the principle of complementarity, and which spelled out, for the as yet uncomprehending scientific world, the crucial significance of Heisenberg's discovery.

It was the uncertainty principle that gave the key to the difficulty of reconciling the contradiction between wave and particle to which I have referred. (The reference is to the controversy as to whether light exhibits the characteristic properties of waves or of particles.—*J.O.*) . . . (According to Bohr), we can only know fully the detail of half the things in the world. Every quantity has its complement (also technically called its conjugate); position has velocity as its complement, time has energy, and so on. By discussing quite a lot of examples, he showed that we could never get experiments which would exactly give both of any pair of them simultaneously, and this means you can never devise an experiment which will say "This is a particle and not a wave, or vice versa."⁹

From these and other important theories and discoveries it has become clear that the postulates of post-modern physics are antithetical to those of the modern period. Instead of believing that science is inexorably narrowing the area of a limited unknown in a theoretically knowable context, it is now maintained that the more which is revealed, just so much more is shown at the same time to be unknowable. Not only do new revelations uncover new mysteries, but the essence of the stuff of life has been shown by definition to be unknowable in its entirety.

Today, physicists no longer speak of immutable "laws" of nature with regard to sub-nuclear events. They recognize that, in widening their horizons of inquiry, they must, at the same time, limit the extent of their claim to know. They operate today not with laws, but with probability. That is, a pattern, process or law of nature can be spoken of and relied upon to the extent of the probability of reoccurrence under carefully controlled and repeated test conditions. For example, the average energy of the molecules in a system (a system is defined as that portion of the universe which is enclosed by boundaries at the discretion of the experimenter, and upon which we can more or less focus our attention as external observers) is related to the frequency of collisions that occur between the molecules in the system. This can, indeed, be considered only on a statistical basis. The greater the frequency the higher the temperature. This says nothing, however, nor can anything, in fact, be said about the behavior of any one molecule.

This very fact, that post-modern science can measure and define physical reality only by the yardstick of statistical probability, is a clear admission of its limitations. For to operate in terms only of statistical probability as the criterion of measurement is to admit the inability of operating in the more precise categories of immutable laws of nature. Statistical probability is a concession to the complexity and otherness of the sub-nuclear world. It would be an unnecessary concession if all could,

9. A. Körner and M. H. L. Pryce, eds., *Observation and Interpretation: A Symposium of Philosophers and Physicists* (New York: Academic Press, 1958), p. 217.

indeed, be known, as was believed in the Laplacian view of a mechanistic universe. To be able to operate in terms no more precise than probability is to deny any possibility, even a theoretical one, of ever reaching certainty. This is a direct implication of the uncertainty principle.

The clear conclusion is that we can no longer imagine our world to be a great machine wherein all is determined and knowable. Rather, our world now appears to be, at its core, unknowable, and may be characterized as possessing the potential for infinite possibility, variety and change. This view is reflected in the scientific world by the use of probability distribution as the means of measurement. Ours is not a static universe, but, rather, one in which evolution continues constantly on many levels.

Even with our admittedly limited knowledge of our world, we can, today, have an infinitely greater awareness of the wonders of the universe and of a sense of the miraculous than could ancient man. This is true, not so much with respect to what we can see, but, rather, with respect to what we understand to exist below the level of our immediate sensory experience. Biblical man conceived of miracle as the defying of the laws of nature by God. To him, this was a concrete expression of the most profound Divine love. The laws of nature had been suspended by God for man in his hour of need. Modern man rejected this simple, trusting, yet humble, religious view of the world, and substituted for it a machine-like universe, some parts of which he believed he understood, while other parts had still to be figured out. In so doing, modern man and his assumed knowledge became both the measure and the measurer, and, hence, the knower of all things.

Today we realize that the ancients were, in a way, intuitively correct in their feelings about the miraculous nature of the universe, though the dimensions and the implications of their insight, in the light of the scientific knowledge available to us, would have been unimaginable to them. But as did they, so do we stand again, in this post-modern age, in renewed awe and wonder before the unfolding, yet hidden, mysteries of God's world. And, interestingly, it is only by virtue of some knowledge of the physical world through science that we can properly appreciate the scope of these infinite wonders.

Einstein once wrote that

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the power of all true science to know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religiousness.¹⁰

We Jews require neither Dr. Einstein nor post-modern physics to induce

10. Barnett, *Op. cit.*, introduction.

in us a feeling of awe and wonder before the mysteries of God's world. As we have already noted, the Bible—the books of Psalms, the prophetic books—in fact, our entire tradition, is replete with exalted expressions of just these very feelings. Though this be true, nonetheless, contemporary physics is an essential source of information about the nature of the physical world. It is in our interest that we become sensitive to, and aware of, the inter-relatedness of human concerns. The implications of one discipline can take on new meaning for apparently unrelated disciplines. Clearly, the data we may derive from science can be crucial for developing an informed understanding of the universe, even in the context of religious concern.

It should be valuable to recognize that the quality of religious concern, a humble feeling of wonder and awe in the presence of the dimension of the miraculous in life, is reinforced by the paradigm of post-modern physics. Thus, even though he may no longer be able to believe in miracle as an abrogation of the laws of nature, post-modern man is able to respond to the world with a deepened "sense of miraculous." In this regard, characteristic of this quality of mind, it is to be noted that in Abraham Joshua Heschel's volume, *God In Search of Man*,¹¹ where awe and wonder in the presence of the mystery of life, component elements of the sense of the miraculous are detailed, there is but one entry in the index under miracles, "Miracles hidden,"¹² while there are some 19 separate entries under "Awe," covering more than 38 pages of text,¹³ 37 entries under "Wonder" covering some 50 pages of text,¹⁴ and 47 entries under "Mystery," covering more than 65 pages of text.¹⁵

We operate today with an expanded model of the laws of nature, expanded to include that which cannot be adequately subsumed in categories of immutable laws—but, rather, laws which, within their very ongoing regularity, contain both the potential for change as well as a theoretical unknowableness, or mystery, on a nuclear level of existence, the very level at which profound evolutionary change occurs.

The sense of the miraculous in our post-modern age may now be appreciated on two levels. The first is indicated in what we can perceive with our five senses. This level, on which we respond with a sense of the miraculous to the order and harmony of nature in our daily lives, we share with sensitive human beings of all ages. It is the grand pattern of nature which gives rise to both the religious impulse toward faith in a Divine Creator, and is, at the same time, the basic presupposition of the scientific method.

11. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1955).

12. *Ibid.*, p. 433.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 429.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 437.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 433.

Yet, beyond this level of existence, which we perceive with our senses directly, is the second level of the sense of the miraculous which post-modern man has only begun to be aware of and to understand. This aspect of the sense of the miraculous we can share fully only with our fellow human beings of the last few decades. This is the hidden level of existence, the unknown world, the physical ground of being of the very matter of life itself, worlds within worlds, horizons beyond our meager faculties' ability to comprehend. It is a world of infinite complexity, of waves and particles, of mass and energy, a world of limitless possibilities and change, an ever-widening realm of mystery and an ever-present sense of the miraculous. Thus, paradoxical as it may at first appear, a basic implication of contemporary physics offers a new and rational basis for the compelling religious feeling, a sense of the miraculous.

Genesis 1:4

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THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT VERSES in the Bible because it mentions, for the first time in this Book (rather early, as appropriate to a creation), the value idea of the good: "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." A significant and grave "And." For God saw, not only the light, but also the goodness of it, dividing the good from the evil. This is a new, supernatural, ethical kind of sight—repeatedly referred to in the chapter because of its exceptional importance; the seventh "good" even turns into a "very good." Also, the second and the third chapters dwell on the moral idea of the good, which they further develop and elucidate. Considering this twofold genesis, the thesis of a single world is not faithful to the Bible and, indeed, unrealistic.

God would not have had to bring the good into being if He had found it. For this reason, God did not see the good of the light actually—He procreated it first, and then saw it. Pointedly: the amoral-physical universe was discovered by God, who generated only the moral-spiritual universe. This dualistic aspect implements the physical cosmology by a spiritual cosmogony—the acknowledged difference between cosmology and cosmogony is deep-rooted. The cosmology of nature is amoral-areligious or uncreated; the cosmogony of morals is a created or divine work.

In the words of the famous German philosopher, Kant, who endlessly pondered about the notions of God and origin: "One should not say that God created the natural phenomena, but that He regulated (*anordnete*) the things,"—He created only the regulating or ordering Commandments. According to the dual standpoint, God engendered merely the spiritual phenomena (*noumena*) of normative directives or guiding value ideas. This spiritualization of the creation does not deprive the Supreme Being of His creative role, but allots Him only the spiritual field of endeavor. Having been put into right perspective, that restriction is, simultaneously, an enrichment.

As long as God did not produce the good or valuable, there was only the natural (sky and earth, air and water, light and darkness). These phenomena are neither good nor bad. However, the moral-religious world of the spiritual value completes the amoral-areligious world of physical nature. Thus, creation is spontaneously doubled. God not only announces: Let there be light, but also ordains: Let the light be valuable.

In the "double-realm" (Goethe), there was first the light by natural

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or divine impact. The light, like the darkness, serves the good and the evil indifferently. Light and darkness are amoral or value-neuter natural phenomena, and acquire, by the establishment of a moral purpose, the quality of goodness or badness. And the secular antithesis of morality and amorality is valid for the humanist atheist as well as for the religious believer.

One of the spiritual values is God—who adds the moral quality to the natural quality. Thus, He creates a second world beside the existing world. This coronation of an amoral system by a moral system is the remarkable metamorphosis from Monism to Dualism. Homo sapiens “eats from the tree of knowledge,” i.e., from the tree of value. He will henceforth “know good and evil” (Genesis 3:22). The animal is unaware of this distinction, differentiating only between useful and noxious objects. Occasionally bereaving himself of the divine spark of value, man returns to the amoral stage of the beast. On the human level, the loss of the sense of value amounts to a disintegration of the quality of life.

Since the double wonder of two worlds appears first in verse 1:4 of Genesis, this passage deserves our full attention, preventing us from getting stuck with the natural order. The moral-religious order also exists, and wants also to be recognized. The materialistic failure to conceive the spiritual universe is just as unjustified as the nihilistic failure to perceive the physical universe. But that memorable verse of the Bible lets us ascend to the emancipating version of dualism, instead of sinking to materialistic oneness or nihilistic agnosticism.

The principle of the good dawns already in verse 1:2 of Genesis, which proclaims the presence of the “Spirit of God.” The idea of this good also pertains to the spiritual realm. The spiritual value evolves from a spiritual Being—the light, astonishingly, changes from an amoral element to a moral means. In the Biblical story of creation there emerges, as in the Platonic doctrine of two worlds, the dichotomy of spirit and matter, reason and mechanism, “ought” and “is.” Modern philosophy only confirms those ancient findings which no critical cleverness can erase. The motto of scientific progress still is: Back to the Bible!

Jewishness

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THIS ESSAY REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT TO ANALYZE

the somewhat vague concept of Jewishness in the more precise sense of *Yiddishkeit*. The latter is a phenomenon by no means typical of every segment of the Jewish people, though this fact is frequently overlooked, even by serious students who consider as universal many elements which are typical of only the Eastern European Jew. To cite but one familiar example: is "Jewish humor" really a feature of the Jew in every part of the world? Or is it not rather deeply rooted in the mentality called *Yiddishkeit*? Whatever humor is found among Sefardim, Jews of Spanish-Portuguese extraction, it differs as greatly from what we normally call "Jewish humor" as does their music from that of Eastern European Jewry. Nor is Jewishness in this specific sense (as from now on we shall call it in this essay) identical with Judaism *per se*. Viewed from the angle of history, the term is actually older than "Judaism"—the latter being of relatively more recent origin. Leo Baeck always impressed upon his students the fact that the medieval Jew hardly, if ever, called his religion "Judaism" but, rather, "Torah." On the other hand, *Yiddishkeit* appeared at a far earlier date and meant more than merely being a Jew in the religious sense. For this, the word *Yisroel* was used.

While the foundation of Jewishness naturally rests in our religious tradition, Jewishness is a hybrid of two elements from the outside. Originally, "Yiddish" meant "Jewish-German;" as is generally known, it is basically an Old High German dialect containing a certain admixture of Hebrew and Slavic words. According to modern students of Yiddish, the origin of this language must be sought in the acceptance of Old High German by a small group of Jews, hailing from the Western part of the empire of Charlemagne, who had spoken a Roman dialect which had developed into Old French. They took up residence in a territory which they called *Loter*, between the Moselle and the Rhine Rivers. I see in this name a reference to *Loth(a)ringen*-Lorraine, named after Lothar II, son of Lothar I and great-grandson of Charlemagne. After the death of Louis the Pious, Charlemagne's heir to the entire empire of the Franks, his two younger sons, in the treaty of Verdun (843) forced their older brother, Lothar I, to a settlement which left him only a relatively narrow strip of land from the North Sea to the Alps, in addition to Burgundy and Italy, and allowed him to keep the title of emperor. All the territory to the West of this strip—which later on was to become France—went to

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Charles the Bald, while the Eastern part fell to Ludwig II, typically sur-named "the German." The territory in the midst of these two powers was considerably reduced in the days of Lothar II and, after his death in 869, was divided between them in the treaty of Mersen (870). Still, the Northern part thereof kept at least the name of its original ruler. To this day, German is the language prevailing in the East of Lorraine, whereas French dominates in its Western part.

This would justify the assumption that the transition from Old French to Old German took place when this territory first assumed its name and before it became a part of the Eastern Empire; in other words, shortly after 850 C.E. The Jews in *Loter* simply adjusted to the fact that they belonged to a country whose language was Old German and shared its gradual development into Middle High German by the middle of the 11th Century, while their numbers increased considerably in those two centuries, their ranks being consistently swelled by newcomers from France and Italy.

We know that, from the days of Charlemagne almost to the First Crusade, the Rhineland witnessed an intimate relationship between Jews and Christians that led to cultural crossfertilization. While the music of the Church was strongly influenced by the modes of the Synagogue, the latter also adopted certain rites of the former, such as the custom of *Yahrzeit*, of the Kaddish as a prayer for the departed analogous to the *Pater noster*, and the lighting of candles in memory of the dead.

But when, during the 13th, and still more so during the 14th century, the majority of those Jews from Germany emigrated *en masse* to the East of Europe, they preserved their Germanic dialect, instead of simply repeating the process of the ninth century, and added a universal usage of Slavic languages which we know for certain became familiar to them. Does this represent an exact parallel to the example of the Sefardim who, even after their expulsion from the Iberian peninsula, tenaciously stuck to their *Ladino* which is even closer to Classic Spanish than Yiddish is to Old German? Only on the surface do both cases appear identical. Yet the motivation of the Sefardim was totally different from that of the erstwhile German Jew. All we may concede is that both shared a sense of superiority to the people from whose midst they had been driven.

But here the similarity ends. The Sefardim (who looked at themselves as the only authentic Jews and as Spaniards at one and the same time) always remained conscious of their idiom having been the original language of Spain. In contrast, it took the Eastern European Jew only a few generations to forget that Yiddish had denoted *Yiddish-Deutsch*—Jewish-German—and to look at it as "Jewish" to such an extent that to this day quite a few more naïve Yiddish-speaking people fail to grasp the fact that there are other Jews who do not know that language.

What is the reason for this tenacity? It would be ludicrous to assume that the Eastern Jew continued to look at himself as a "German in exile." What, then, was there in the German language which made the Eastern Jew cling to it with such strong, if perhaps subconscious, determination? The answer is: not that it was German, but that it had become such an apt instrument for the expression of what went on in the Jewish soul. Hardly any attention is ever paid to the fact that *Deutsch* originally did not denote a nationality, but rather meant "folksy, popular" (*diotisk* in Old High German)—in other words, the direct, unaffected, down-to-earth speech of the common people. Typical is a term preserved in Yiddish: *fardatschen* does not mean "to translate into German," but "to make clear, intelligible" even to the simple mind.

Its earthy approach called forth a ready echo in the Rhenish Jews of the early Middle Ages. Like Biblical Hebrew, it expressed itself in a very concrete fashion and, thus, had a much more dramatic impact, an impact gradually weakened when German developed into a more sophisticated language. Goethe, the greatest master of modern German, still heard Jewish spoken in his day and remarked that it contained a "dramatic element" (*etwas pathetisches*) which he connected with the energetic, dynamic character of the Jewish soul. It was, therefore, the psychological aspect of Old German which must be held responsible for its retention by those erstwhile Jews from Germany. In their attempts to bring out what was astir in their soul they used it as their most adequate tool. However, this psychological impact was still greatly enhanced when, on their way to Eastern Europe, and in Eastern Europe itself, they blended it with Slavic music. As a result, a transition took place that paralleled the linguistic change of 850–1050 C.E., and which proved at least as thorough-going. Even in Germany, Jewish music had preserved some of its Oriental origin and influenced the melodies of the liturgy of the Church. At the same time, it had assumed many modes of the "Minnesong"—among them the *leitmotiv* which was anything but Richard Wagner's late innovation. But in Eastern Europe there was a type of music which was infinitely more dramatic. Probably under Mongolian influence it became, in the words of A. Z. Idelsohn, "the vehicle of tense emotion." A mode "full of fire and romanticism" (again Idelsohn), it became the ideal expression of emotional polarity that expressed both ecstatic joy and abysmal sadness, burning passion and nostalgic melancholy—infinitely more so than did the simple folk-tunes of Medieval Germany.

The historical experiences of the Jews in Germany that had started with hopeful optimism, only to be climaxed in depressing despair, found in Slavic music the appropriate means of expressing the full gamut of their feelings. The *chiaroscuro* of Slavic music (the peak of which in

modern times may be seen in Tchaikovsky) spoke to those Jews with the same immediacy as had Old German.

In this respect, the psyche of the Eastern Jew underwent a development quite different from that of the Sefardi. To the latter, not only the Spanish language, but also Spanish music remained part of his cultural experience. In contrast, the Jew in the East of Europe was caught right in the middle of the clash of two cultures: German and Slavic. The conflict that had been going on for many centuries reached its cultural peak in Bohemia and Moravia of the late Middle Ages, perhaps most pronouncedly so in the city of Prague. While it was the seat of the first German university, was for a number of years the residence of some German emperors, and remained a center of German literature until the first decades of the 20th Century, the Czechs resisted in the field in which they were definitely superior, that of music. Some musicologists consider Bohemia an "old country of music" in which this noble art had reached its pinnacle long before it did in other nations.

At the time of the great Jewish migration from Germany to Eastern Europe, Prague, always considered the gate between East and West, harbored the largest and, in all probability, most influential Jewish community in Europe. Thus, it appears the logical point for the initial meeting of the Jews from Germany with Slavic music.* The outstanding musicologist, Paul Nettl, convincingly demonstrates that this was the place where, in the late Middle Ages, Jewish instrumentalists were found in far larger numbers than elsewhere and that their fame went far beyond Jewish circles. They appear to have been the first to form the type of band later on considered typical of the Gypsies. Never has the question been raised whether so-called "Gypsy music" may not rather have originated with those Jewish instrumentalists instead of *vice versa*, as is commonly assumed. After all, Gypsies had been around for a very long time, perhaps even millennia, before that unique type of music became associated with them. At any rate, what matters, in this context, is the twofold impact of language and music on the soul of the Eastern Jew. Not only are they means of communication, but have far-reaching psychological effects. Language always begins as the verbalization of what is felt and, thus, in turn, may recharge the emotions. Music is an even more direct appeal to man's emotional side. Much that cannot be conveyed by words may be brought home via music. As often as not, it has even a liberating effect on the depressed and oppressed. Slavic melodies and Negro spirituals bespeak the very "dynamics of the downtrodden." How far this is true of the Jewish soul hardly requires any emphasis.

Music plays an indispensable part in the ritual of practically every

* Our assumption of Prague (and Bohemia) as the initial meeting point of Slavs and Jews from Germany appears supported by Maurice Samuel's assertion: "The earliest . . . (Slavic channel into Yiddish) was Czech. . . ."

religion. Thus, wherever there are Jewish services, they call for the leadership of the Cantor. But never has the office of the *Hazzan* played as predominant a role as among the Jews of Eastern Europe. To them, he was more than a singer, but, rather, their most authentic spiritual leader. The highest praise any congregation could find for him was that he was a *guter zoger*, "a good speaker!" Franz Liszt, in his famous essay on the "Music of the Gypsies in Hungary" speaks of a "real Judaic art" in which "the Jews poured out their suppressed emotions and passions. . . ." He refers to the type of music that was found among Eastern Jews—a music able to render every shade of emotion and bring to its listeners a heightened sensitivity. They will hear much more than mere sounds, which, pleasant as they may be, will resound in their very subconscious and will bring about what Theodore Reik, borrowing the phrase from Nietzsche, calls "listening with the third ear."

It is in Hasidism that this trend developed most strongly. Its adherents saw in music the most direct and immediate of all languages and, thus, allowed the melody to take such preponderance over the text of their prayers that they often became *Lieder ohne Worte*; "Songs Without Words." While their preachers—in contrast with their less emotional and more intellectual colleagues among other Jewries—spoke in a warm-hearted, down-to-earth manner, from which wit and humor were not absent, so as to reach the innermost dimension of their listeners, they also occasionally used the non-verbal approach.

There is the typical story of one of those *Maggidim* who felt that he had failed in bringing home a certain point to his listeners. Hence, he cut his discourse short and said: "I see that you don't catch on to my message. So let me sing it for you!" This he did—without words!—whereupon the congregation, as one man, exclaimed: "Now we know what you mean!"

A friend of mine, who with a Hasidic *Rebbe* shared cramped quarters in the Warsaw Ghetto before its destruction by the Nazis, told me another, equally significant story. One day his room-mate asked him: "How old are you?" "Forty years!" he replied. Then the *Rebbe* hummed a haunting tune and asked my friend: "And how old are you now?" "Four thousand years!" My informant not only told me this story, but played the melody on his violin, and I spontaneously admitted that even without the harrowing experiences of the Ghetto, similar feelings were set loose in me.

Thus, Yiddish and Slavic music joined in creating in the soul of the Eastern European Jew a sensitivity even to its most subtle shades which, unbeknown to him, was actually the realization of what more than a thousand years before his emigration from Germany had been stressed as the hallmark of an authentic Jew. Reinhold Niebuhr pointed out that Jesus rebuked his fellow-Jews because they were capable of nei-

ther joy nor sorrow, they neither danced nor mourned, they could plumb life neither in its heights nor in its depths. Alexander Miller, Niebuhr's disciple, adds: "The Jew characteristically is peculiarly endowed for both joy and sorrow. The race breeds great tragedians and master comedians. . . ." The only error in this statement consists in ascribing racial qualities to what was actually the result of historical contingencies. When Niebuhr and Miller agree with Koestler's familiar statement that the Jew "is the exposed nerve of humanity," this should be more correctly applied to the representatives of Eastern European Jewry.

In my opinion, this historical development explains why, in the field of music, the number of interpretative artists is so disproportionately high: the overwhelming majority of Jewish conductors, violinists and pianists hail from Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, or Russia. But what is even more important is that this development seems to offer the key to the solution of the question why psychoanalysis has been dubbed "Jewish Science," and this only half in joke. Its father, Sigmund Freud, must have had an inkling of it when he referred to himself as "a psychological Jew;" he was merely guilty of the common fallacy of equating the Eastern Jew with the Jew *par excellence*. If we understand him in this sense, we may be even more inclined to agree with his statement that it was "not entirely a matter of chance that the first advocate of psychoanalysis was a Jew." However limited his actual knowledge of Judaism may have been, it was Freud's Galician and Moravian ancestry which caused him to become "the Columbus of the subconscious. . ."

Jewishness—this quality peculiar to the Eastern European Jew—is a contribution to Judaism that stands on a par with the Bible as the product of the Holy Land, the Babylonian Talmud as the contribution of ancient Mesopotamian Jewry, or Medieval Jewish Philosophy as the product of the Jewish-Arabic symbiosis in Spain. It is fully aware of being, not just the characteristic of a certain group, but a way of becoming more human and humane, which is borne out by the typical admonition: "*Zy a Mensch!*"—"Be human!" It sees its goal in *Menschlichkeit*—in being, or becoming, human in the most profound sense of the word.

Is it, then, an overstatement when we maintain that Jewishness is of equal importance with Judaism? Those Eastern European Jews who created Jewishness were certainly no psychologists; still, they showed us the royal road to our faith. All of us come into the world with feelings; we are emotional beings long before we develop thought and reason; we are psychological creatures before we begin to philosophize. For this reason, many ideas, however brilliant, remain anemic and have no appeal when cut off from their original roots in man's psyche.

Where there is Jewishness, there is still hope for Judaism. Modern Israel offers the strongest proof for the validity of such an assertion: the

overwhelming majority of Israelis are anything but "religious," as we understand it. Yet the very country breathes Jewishness, a view which is attested to by practically everyone who visits there. Jewishness, that import from Eastern Europe, has, in all probability, been the most effective antidote to all attempts at making Israel into nothing more than a nation "like the rest of the nations. . ."

Without any planning or intent, the history of a segment of our people has brought forth a quality which may still be the strongest guarantee of Jewish survival in more than merely a physical sense. This quality—Jewishness—appears of utmost importance in the field of Jewish education, especially in America. Its evolution indicates that the teachings of Judaism are likely to take firmest roots where that psychological foundation has first been laid. In its own place, it is an appropriate illustration of Goethe's famous motto:

"If you don't feel it, you will never grasp it."

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A RE-CONSIDERATION OF HERMANN COHEN

Review-Essay by SEYMOUR FELDMAN

Reason and Hope: Selections from the Jewish Writings of Hermann Cohen. Translated by EVA JOSPE. W. W. Norton and Co., Inc. New York, 1971. 237 pp. \$6.50.

CLASSICAL JEWISH PHILOSOPHY ENDS IN THE sixteenth century with such figures as Isaac Abravanel and Elijah del Medigo. This period is defined by the attempt to relate philosophical theories to Jewish religious ideas that had been developed within the Rabbinic tradition, or, conversely, to adapt the latter ideas to the prevailing philosophical doctrines or language of the day. This attempt was initiated by Philo and ultimately rejected by Spinoza, who, as Professor Harry Wolfson has shown, marks a new era in the history of philosophy. Although there were Jewish philosophers who thought about Judaism during the 18th and 19th centuries, none of them before Hermann Cohen produced a systematic, coherent system of religious philosophy based upon classical Jewish sources. Mendelssohn, for example, did not integrate his general philosophical outlook with his beliefs in traditional Judaism; they coexist in peaceful ignorance of each other. Krochmal was primarily a historian who did think philosophically about Jewish history, but he did not produce a philosophical-theological work comparable to Saadia's *Book of Beliefs and Opinions* or Maimonides' *Guide To the Perplexed*. Nor were such figures as Solomon Steinheim or Solomon Formstecher, in the 19th century, perpetuators of this latter tradition. They lacked either the philosophical power or the Rabbinic scholarship possessed by their predecessors; moreover, their influence, even in their own day, was minimal. The first real "Jewish Philosopher," I submit, in modern times, was Hermann Cohen. Possessing the necessary philosophical and scholarly qualifications, he was the first Jew to attempt to relate modern philosophy to the classical Jewish tradition and to forge a new system that would integrate the tradition of Western German philosophy and Rabbinic Judaism. To be sure, Cohen could not, as Maimonides or Philo before him could, read his own philosophical ideas, *ad libitum*, into the classical sources of Judaism. He recognized that there were limits to the interpretation of texts, although, as we shall see, he sometimes did read his own philosophical ideas into them. But the "gates of interpreta-

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tion" were, for Cohen, not "open" all the way, as they were for his medieval predecessors.

Nor did Cohen completely take over classical Judaism as a datum within which his philosophical system was to be defined. The traditional concept of revelation, for example, was by now no longer uncontestable, and its consequences, i.e. the Halakhah, were being challenged. Yet, de part as he would from this datum, Cohen did attempt to situate himself *somewhere* within classical Judaism, and his divergences from this tradition were, in his eyes at least, more of a matter of interpretation than of direct rejection (e.g. his doctrine of the Messiah). Accordingly, Cohen should be regarded as the first modern Jewish philosopher who takes traditional Judaism seriously and who attempts to incorporate that tradition within his philosophical system.

Yet despite Cohen's philosophical achievements he has been relatively neglected by contemporary Jewry. Rosenzweig and Buber, with proper justification, have received great attention both from Jews and non-Jews. Cohen, however, has not had this impact on our generation, and this, I believe, has been a mistake. Although the reasons for this neglect are not altogether clear, I would suggest that Cohen became the victim of three stereotypes whose demise brought him, as well, into nigh-oblivion. He was characterized as the philosophical spokesman for classical German Reform Judaism and, as a result of the latter's decline, if not death, Cohen, too, became forgotten. He was also labelled as a neo-Kantian, indeed *the* great interpreter of Kant in modern times, and with the waning of the influence of Kant in the first half of the 20th century, Cohen's importance was again relegated to a few pages in the histories of Jewish philosophy. Finally, he was typed as a rationalist who preferred to deal with ideas rather than with facts, with abstractions rather than with concrete experience; and with the decline of rationalist theology, Cohen suffered a similar fate. I shall try to show that these stereotypes were all misleading, and that, stripped of these superficial categories, Cohen's philosophy of Judaism is not only of great historical importance, but is *the* most significant system of Jewish religious philosophy since Hasdai Crescas.

For this reason, I heartily welcome Mrs. Eva Jospe's present selection and translation from Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften*. The book should elicit the consideration and study that Cohen's ideas and writings deserve. Until now, the interested English-speaking public has had to be satisfied with a few miscellaneous essays in anthologies and the brief selections in Mordecai Kaplan's *The Meaning and Purpose of Jewish Existence*. The original German edition included a wide variety of essays of varying length. Some were extensive scholarly monographs on such figures as Maimonides and Spinoza; others were shorter, topical essays that appeared in various German-Jewish journals and occasionally

read like sermons—not the kind of sermon to which most contemporary Jews are accustomed, but the kind of philosophical midrash of Philo. Mrs. Jospe has taken a sample from these materials and has arranged them according to specific themes, such as Judaism and German culture, Prophetic Morality, Zionism, *et alia*. These headings are generally representative of some of Cohen's main concerns, but they do not bring out sufficiently either the philosophical content of some of the essays actually included or, more generally, the philosophical significance of Cohen's contribution to Jewish thought. Cohen was primarily a philosopher, not a critic of culture and society. What has been included, however, has been clearly and, by and large, accurately translated, and useful introductory comments have been included.

II

In at least one significant respect Hermann Cohen was a typical modern Jew: Judaism was a problem for him. Although he was born into a traditional Jewish home and received a solid Talmudic training from his father, he ended these studies after a brief fling with rabbinical studies at the Breslau Rabbinical Seminary and then devoted himself entirely to a career in philosophy. Eventually, he became one of the most well-known interpreters of Kant's philosophy and was appointed to a professorship at Marburg University, no mean accomplishment for a non-converted Jew in nineteenth-century Germany. During this period of his life, Cohen displayed no great concern for Judaism, although he did not deny his Jewish origin or membership in the Jewish community. (How so contemporary a description of the modern Jew!) This indifference came to a sudden end when the German historian, Treitschke, attacked the Jews as being a foreign and, hence, disloyal element in the German nation. Cohen responded to this accusation and thenceforth became an active Jew and began his gradual, but steady, journey back to the Jewish religion. This journey was to include his professorship at the Reform Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin and to culminate in the writing of his magnum opus, *Die Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*.

Since Judaism was a problem for Cohen, his attitudes and views concerning it were not static or fixed. He thought seriously and deeply about the Jewish religion, and his writings reveal that his ultimate ideas were attained after a long and arduous struggle. Some of the salient points and issues in his intellectual biography have been discussed by others, so that it is sufficient to note here that for Cohen, as for many modern Jews, Judaism has to be digested or, better, ingested into one's own intellectual and personal make-up. Naturally, this involves an ele-

J. I. Bergmann, H., *Faith and Reason*; Rotenstreich, N., *Jewish Philosophy in Modern Times*; Guttman, Jr., *Philosophies of Judaism*.

ment of subjectivity. But, as Rosenzweig was to remark, from where else can a philosopher philosophize? Perhaps this is the identifying feature of *modern* Jewish philosophy: Judaism does not exist, at least not *ab initio*, as a datum. For us, Judaism has to be won. With respect to this aspect of Cohen's philosophy, this present anthology falls short; it does not convey this feature of his development as a Jewish philosopher. Ultimately, however, Cohen managed to achieve a fairly coherent and complete system of religious philosophy utilizing the classical sources of the Jewish religion, the Bible, Rabbinic literature and the Siddur.

Throughout his discussions of specific theological concepts such as God, creation and revelation, there is a pervasive concern to differentiate Jewish monotheism from Greek pantheism, which he construed in a somewhat novel way as materialism; not the materialism of the classical atomists nor of the modern Marxists, but as the thesis that nature and its elements constitute the sum total of all there is, and that this totality is characterized by deterministic and fixed natural laws. Cohen evidently derived this conception of materialism from both Spinoza and Kant, for to both of these philosophers nature is a unitary system of deterministic laws to which man, at least as a physical organism, is completely subject.² Accordingly, that a philosophical system finds a place for a unitary God was, by itself, a fact of no great religious significance for Cohen. What counted was the role and the particular nature of God vis-à-vis nature. In pantheism, especially the pantheism of Spinoza, God and nature are equivalent. Even in Greek pantheism there is no great concern to distinguish God as a *supra* natural force or power. But here is precisely the point that Cohen wanted to emphasize. Jewish monotheism is not to be characterized merely as the thesis that there exists only one deity, but as the thesis that there exists a unique being, beyond and above any natural characterization and determination. For Cohen, monotheism is the claim that God is above nature, which means, for him, not merely that God and nature are two distinct beings or entities, as they are for Aristotle, but that God *creates* nature, which claim Aristotle denies. Accordingly, Jewish monotheism entails the thesis that God created the universe. Any kind of materialism or, better, naturalism, that would either identify God with nature or so distinguish God and nature as to make them radically independent of each other is thereby negated. This is, for Cohen, the unique achievement of classical Judaism.³

Cohen's concept of God is intertwined with a network of other theological concepts such as creation, revelation, redemption and holiness,

2. Kant, as we know, tried to invent a different world for man *qua* moral agent, a domain in which he would not be subject to the physical determinism of nature, a world in which he would be a free agent.

3. It is interesting to note that the great Israeli Biblical scholar, the late Yehezkel Kaufmann, made the same point in his attempt to differentiate Mosiac monotheism from any pagan analogue.

whose elaboration had to wait for the posthumously published *Religion der Vernunft*. The key notion in this conceptual matrix is that of *correlation*: the various aforementioned theological ideas are so related that each is, in some way, implicated in the other. Although this notion is not without its difficulties, it is a rich one and leads to some interesting developments, of which perhaps the correlations between God and the world as well as between man and man are the most noteworthy.

During the classical period of medieval philosophy, one of the most hotly debated subjects was whether the universe was created or eternal. To the medievals, the answer to this question was significant insofar as it revealed one's attitude to the question of God's relationship to the world. Belief in creation meant that God is concerned with man; belief in eternity meant that God is indifferent to man, either generically or individually. In modern philosophy, however, there has been very little interest in this question, which has been handed over to the astronomers for solution. This disinterest has also reached modern Jewish thinkers who generally either avoid the issue or treat it gingerly and metaphorically. Even Rosenzweig and Buber, both of whom make the concept of creation part of their theological vocabulary, tend to emphasize other theological categories. In this respect Cohen is an exception. For him, the creation of the world is the most exemplary dimension of God's nature and exhibits, quite strikingly, Cohen's notion of correlation. God and the world are, for Cohen, the specific exemplifications of the general ontological categories of being and becoming. God as pure being is a familiar concept. (Cf. *Exodus* 3:14.) The world as His creature is ontologically dependent upon God and, as such, is pure becoming. This, too, is a common concept in medieval philosophy. What Cohen has done is to make this distinction the definition of creation of the world: the universe is created insofar as it is seen as dependent in some way upon God, with whom it is metaphysically and logically correlated. This ontological dependence is to be construed in the manner of the Rabbis of the Midrash as continuous re-creation or as the continuous preservation of the world by God. By defining creation in this way, Cohen is able to avoid the question that plagued the medievals centering around the problem of temporal origin. Cohen's claim that the universe is dependent upon God in some *non-temporal* way is independent of the scientific question that still troubles the astronomer: did our universe have a temporal beginning? No matter how the latter question is answered, Cohen claims that religion can still assert the ontological dependence of the universe upon some supranatural power that is the source of all nature.⁴

4. This conception of creation is also found in the late medieval Jewish theologian, Hasdai Crescas. Although Cohen knew Crescas' philosophical work, *The Light of the Lord*, he does not mention it in this context.

The concept of correlation is also evidenced in Cohen's philosophy of human nature, anticipating both Buber from one point of view, and contemporary "analytic" philosophers from another. Cohen develops the theory that the individual attains his true self-hood only in correlation with "the other," whether it be divine or human.⁵ The analogue to Buber's I-Thou correlation is Cohen's notion of the *Mitmensch*, the fellow-human-being, in and through whom any one given individual becomes and achieves his status as a person. The basis of this relationship to the other is empathy, the recognition of the other as deserving sympathy and love. To become a true human being is to partake in an active relationship through love with other humans. Actually, this notion is a development of Kant's famous refutation of Cartesian Idealism. Whereas the latter philosophy begins with the ego as an isolated and independent reality, Kant and Cohen advance the view that the ego is always in correlation with the other, so that there is a radical inter-dependence amongst all human beings. Kant's abstract ethical ideal of a Kingdom of Free Agents has now been transformed into the concrete religious ideal of the messianic kingdom, in which all humanity is united by mutual affection and sympathy. Cohen was very much taken up with the messianic concept, and although he emphasized the non-personal, universalistic aspects of this notion, as was common amongst German liberal Jewry, he was a fervid believer in this goal. It was not a mere slogan for him, as Rosenzweig so poignantly reported.⁶

Indeed, it is here that the line of thought that brought Cohen to a deeper appreciation of religion, in general, and of Judaism, in particular, becomes quite evident. As has been noticed by Bergmann and Rotenstreich, in Cohen's earlier philosophical writings religion was not central to his system, where it was subsumed under ethics. Gradually, however, he broke away from this Kantian view and developed the idea that religion is rooted in a different dimension of human experience: the awareness and feeling of guilt, and the need and desire for atonement. Here, in the recognition of his finitude and moral imperfection, the individual attains the consciousness of his self. Through divine atonement, achieved without any intermediary, man reaches his true level of individuality. In Kantian ethics, the general and formal requirements of a rationalistic morality are valid for man as man, as a member of any society. The purely personal and idiosyncratic features of human experience are ignored by ethics; but they need to be accounted for. Herein lies the root and role of religion.⁷ It is no wonder, then, that

5. This parallel to Buber has been briefly discussed by Steven Schwarzschild in his article, "To Recast Rationalism," reprinted in *Arguments and Doctrines*, edited by Arthur A. Cohen (New York: Harper, 1970), p. 193.

6. N. Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought* (New York: Schocken Books, 1953), p. 351.

7. Rotenstreich is very good on these points.

several of the essays in the *Jüdische Schriften* are devoted, not only to the general concept of atonement, but to the Day of Atonement, its significance and importance. Anyone who still labors under the preconception that Cohen was a formalistic rationalist should read this material, which has been wisely included by Mrs. Jospe in this anthology.⁸

Indeed, it is about time that this stereotype be put to rest. By the time Cohen had written *Religion der Vernunft*, the traditional Jewish categories of sin, redemption, holiness and prayer were at the core of his religious philosophy. Not only had he, wittingly or unwittingly, abandoned his Kantian prejudices, but he had gone well beyond the standard Reform Jewish views on many central theological concepts and issues. Indeed, in reading Cohen's later writings, one is both impressed and surprised at the extent to which he had gone *back* to the classical sources of Judaism, especially Rabbinic literature and the traditional prayer-book of his youth. This is especially evident in his discussions of prayer and, in particular, of the Siddur. He writes about prayer, not as a man who merely acknowledges its religious significance, but as a Jew who *dovens* and expects to be heard by God. Contrary to the almost unanimous opinion of his fellow Reform Jews, Cohen advocates the retention of Hebrew as the language of prayer. In fact, Cohen was a traditionalist in many areas of Jewish concern, showing a deep appreciation for the various *sancta* of the Jewish tradition. In many respects he was closer to the views of such conservative Jewish thinkers as Fraenkel, Schechter and Graetz than he was to Geiger, Kohler and I. M. Wise.

There is, however, one general topic where Cohen's "Reform" allegiance stands out, and perhaps here he seems irrelevant to most contemporary Jews. Not only had he swallowed completely the classical Reform doctrine of the mission of Israel in the Diaspora, but he extended this doctrine to incorporate a kind of cultural Jewish-German synthesis that sounds, at times, like German chauvinism.⁹ Of course, it is easy to criticize Cohen from the vantage-point of Auschwitz; and I know that there are still some Jews—the "universalists"—who continue to find his strong strictures against Zionism valid, but I find these aspects of Cohen's philosophy to be the least tenable and significant. One may be convinced of the "Jewish mission;" but there must be Jews who are to fulfill this mission, and this means, not only that there must be a place where Jews are safe, but an environment where *Judaism* can be practiced and taught freely and naturally. Cohen thought that the Germany of his day had provided this environment. Today it is at least arguable whether the Diaspora can provide a natural ambience for the practice and creative development of Judaism.

8. pp. 198–213.

9. pp. 176–188.

Indeed, one crucial aspect of Cohen's own philosophy of Judaism weakens, if not undermines, his hostility toward Jewish nationalism. Throughout his writings, Cohen continually stresses the great and unique moral teachings of the prophets, an idea which was, admittedly, standard fare amongst Reform Jewish thinkers.¹⁰ Cohen contributes a new facet to this doctrine in his discussion of the moral dimension of poverty. As in his criticism of Greek pantheism and naturalism, he sharply distinguishes the morality of the prophets from that of the Greek philosophers, even from Plato, whom Cohen greatly admired. Greek ethics, he argues, is bereft of any concern for the poor, for the phenomenon of poverty. This was the signal contribution of the Hebrew prophets. This argument led Cohen to advocate a kind of humanistic Socialism in politics. Now anyone who is even slightly familiar with the early history of both the Zionist movement and of the subsequent development of the State of Israel knows that it was the prophetic morality of Amos and Isaiah that inspired such thinkers as Hess, Gordon, Ben-Gurion and others, more than the deterministic jargon of Marxian dialectics. Indeed, it has always been a part of the Zionist ideology to emphasize the social and moral roles and goals of the Jewish state. The kind of democratic socialism that Cohen advocated for Germany has, indeed, been partially fulfilled in Israel.

In conclusion I would like to mention one short piece that beautifully reveals not only Cohen the Jew with a *yiddishe neshamah*, but a facet of his philosophy that is, at the same time, an important feature of the Zionist program.¹¹ During World War I, many thousands of East European Jews fled to Germany. The response of German Jewry was ambivalent, and in some quarters, especially within Reform Jewry, there was outright resentment. Cohen sharply condemned this attitude and advocated a warm reception for his fellow Jews from the East, who, he believed, would give German Jewry a much needed spiritual transfusion. Cohen's moving description of the character and virtues of East European Jewry shows him at his best. He truly believed in the Talmudic dictum that all Israel are responsible for each other.

Mrs. Jospe's anthology is, indeed, an important contribution to our knowledge of a thinker who, I have suggested, is of major significance to Jewish philosophy and religion. Although the book is a self-contained work, it is also an excellent introduction to the great *Religion der Vernunft* that still cries out for a translator.

10. pp. 66-76, 106-118.

11. pp. 189-191.

THE LIGHT STILL SHINES FORTH

Review-Essay by TRUDE WEISS-ROSMARIN

The Star of Redemption. By FRANZ ROSENZWEIG. Translated from the Second Edition of 1930 by William H. Hallo. Foreword by N. N. Glatzer. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. New York, 1971. xviii + 445 pp. \$10.00.

IN A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE SECOND EDITION OF *The Star of Redemption*, Gershom Scholem described it as one of "that peculiar genre of books whose significance, from the moment of publication, was entirely undisputed." Yet, ten years later, he noted that *The Star* "has received no serious treatment." There had been "no desire for serious analysis and clearer definition of the problematic elements which are inevitably present in this, as in any, theology." Scholem suggested that "the awareness that a star has seldom shone forth from such depth and run its course, has driven contemporaries completely away from critical discussion, let alone polemics."¹

Today, forty years later, *The Star* is still "entirely undisputed" and it has not yet been subjected to serious criticism. I think the reason is that Rosenzweig was, and is, being revered as a saintly martyr—and the works of saints are in a special category. Rosenzweig was quite aware of this saint's halo and he debunked it in no uncertain terms.²

He himself was a fiery polemicist and his critical thrust was sharp and cutting. If illness had not struck him down, he might, himself, have provided a "polemics" and "a critical discussion" for a revised edition of *The Star*. Certainly he was conscious of its flaws. Thus, in a letter to Hans Ehrenberg, he referred to it as a *geistreiches Dilettantenbuch*, confessing that

the decision to have it published was the result of the realization that otherwise I would have little to offer. If I had studied *Jüdische Wissenschaft*, I wouldn't need it. But as I have no patience to wait another six years, I shall publish this *geistreiches Dilettantenbuch* and make myself a reputation although at the risk of being denounced.³

He was aware of its flaws even while writing it. In a letter to Gertrud Oppenheim, he confessed: "I am deeply in it. . . . It is altogether quixotic and altogether unpublishable, equally offensive to Christians, Jews and Pagans."⁴

1. Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), pp. 320–324.

2. Nahum N. Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig* (New York: Schocken Books, 1935), p. 155 ff. The letter to Hans Trüb.

3. Franz Rosenzweig, *Briefe* (1935), p. 368.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 342.

Although he regretted that *The Star* was completed when he met Rabbi Nehemiah Nobel, to whom he referred as “my teacher,”⁵ he was also glad that it had happened that way. In a letter to Joseph Prager he explained his ambivalence.

I am grateful that I made his (Nobel's) acquaintance only in the spring of 1919, three years ago, after I had my ammunition, the dangerous book, completed. Because then I needed him, especially to learn putting away this ammunition if necessary. Thanks to him I have become more tolerant and open-hearted. Three years ago I was more orthodox, more anti-Christian and anti-heretical than I am now. I learned from Nobel that there is room for much in the soul of a *great Jew*.⁶

Bernard Martin aptly notes that few, if any, philosophical books were written “under odder circumstances” than *The Star*.⁷ Rosenzweig wrote most of his *magnum opus* during his military service, on army postcards, in white heat and in the short span of half a year, from August 22, 1918, to February 16, 1919. Almost twenty years later, during the final and most agonizing stage of his paralysis, when his friends admired his fortitude and discipline, he wrote to Hans Trueb, that

marshalling this energy is more visible but surely not as great as that with which I wrote *The Star* under the craziest of conditions (the first books were written on army postcards while I was in constant conversation with fellow-soldiers and officers who said—“what kind of correspondence Rosenzweig has!”)⁸

Although Rosenzweig revised the original manuscript, *The Star* stands essentially as it was written—in snatches and in haste—and with the compulsion of one possessed by an idea which he is driven to express. Obviously, this was not conducive to the making of a systematic work of philosophical and theological exposition.

An additional flaw is that *The Star* is written, to use Rosenzweig's term, in an “utterly quixotic style.” In a letter to Joseph Rivlin, who, in 1926, intended to translate the book into Hebrew, Rosenzweig pointed out that it “has at least four styles. . . Naturally this indicates only the basic tones, or rather the types of tones of its parts; yet all of these (styles) are represented in each of the parts, in addition to various others.”⁹

In point of fact, *The Star* is written in prose-poetry fraught with all the opaqueness of an involved German style. It is certainly not the style of the universe of scholarship. In his Translator's Preface, Dr. Hallo writes that to do justice to *The Star* he had to “approach it more like poetry than like a work of prose.” He avers that his translation

attempts to retain the rhythmic cadences of the original while, at the same time, reducing its intricate and sometimes interminable sentences to man-

5. *Ibid.*, p. 568 (Letter to Joseph Carlebach).

6. *Ibid.*, p. 421.

7. Bernard Martin, ed., *Great Twentieth Century Jewish Philosophers* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 126.

8. *Briefe*, p. 576.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 596.

ageable proportions. It is faithful to the original, except where a literal translation threatens to introduce ambiguities not intended in the original.

To translators there applies, of course, the adage that "translators are traitors." Dr. Hallo's, however, is beneficent "treason." His seven years of service to this labor of love have resulted in a version of *The Star* which improves on the readability of the original, without, however, being untrue to it.

But even in its English version *The Star* is laborious reading. It is not so much the subject matter, as Rosenzweig's failure to formulate clearly, that creates the hurdles to be overcome. When he wrote *The Star* he was in search and groping. He knew what he had rejected and to what he had committed himself, theologically and philosophically, but he was not sufficiently versed in the Jewish sources for defining his "New Thinking" in Jewish terms. He was "inspired," and this illumination of a special incandescence found expression in such paragraphs as the one with which *The Star* concludes:

THE FIRST

And this Last is not Last, but an ever Nigh, the Nighest; not the Last, in short, but the First. How difficult is such a First: How difficult is every beginning: To do justice and to love mercy—that still looks like a goal. Before any goal, the will can claim to need a little respite first. But to walk humbly with God—that is no longer goal. That is so unconditional, so free of every condition, of every But-first and Tomorrow, so wholly Today and thus wholly eternal as life and the way. And therefore it partakes of the eternal truth as directly as do life and the way. To walk humbly with thy God—nothing more is demanded there than a wholly present trust. But trust is a big word. It is the seed whence grow faith, hope, and love, and the fruit which ripens out of them. It is the very simplest and just for that the most difficult. It dares at every moment to say Truly to truth. To walk humbly with thy God—the words are written over the gate, the gate which leads out of the mysterious—miraculous light of the sanctuary in which no man can remain alive. Whither, then, do the wings of the gate open? Thou knowest it not? INTO LIFE.¹⁰

In his foreword, Dr. Glatzer notes that Rosenzweig, under the influence of Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, came to reject the conventional philosophical method and style of "abstract thinking." He wanted to see it replaced by "speech-thinking," because "in an actual conversation something happens: you do not anticipate what the other person will say. The abstract-logical thinkers knows his thoughts in advance. The speech-thinker . . . depends on the presence of a definite other person."¹¹

"Speech-thinking" (*Sprachdenken*) was Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy's term. He contrasted it with the Cartesian logic which "is useless for those processes of thought which do not deal with objects but with ourselves."¹² Rosenzweig's passionate sallies against Hegel, on whose philosophy he

10. *The Star of Redemption*, p. 424.

11. *Ibid.*, p. xv.

12. Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy, *I Am An Impure Thinker* (Norwich, Vt.: Argo Books, 1970), p. 65.

had written a typically Hegelian two-volume work¹³ before his conversion to religious existentialism, bear the clear stamp of Rosenstock-Huessy's thinking. Like his erstwhile teacher and friend, who accused the rationalists of posing as thinkers for the past three hundred years,¹⁴ Rosenzweig deprecated theoretical thinking as exemplified by philosophical idealism, as "blind one-sidedness," and declared that "this one-sidedness is the sin for which Idealism was punishment."¹⁵

But the principal flaw of philosophies not grounded in "speech-thinking," as Rosenzweig saw it, is that their methods of logical analysis do not provide answers to the Eternal Questions. He especially decried the thesis of Idealism "that the truth is God," when, in fact, "the truth is truth only because it is from God." But this must not be construed to mean that the truth is identical with God. "God is the 'First and the Last,' by our side, in immediate proximity, as a man finds his friend."¹⁶ It is not by reason, therefore, that God is found, but by the experience of this proximity in which God's essence has vanished in his deed, a deed wholly in-essential, wholly real, wholly proximate in his love.¹⁷ But it is only in the dialogue of speech-thinking, i.e., thought evolving from speech and not speech expressing thought—that God is accessible.

Rosenzweig's "Existentialist logic" does not accept that if $A = B$ then $B = A$. He asserts again and again that "Truth is not God," although "God is Truth."¹⁸ God must be "more" than truth—He is its source and its ground.¹⁹ Truth is not autonomous and it is not rooted in thought and reflection. It "turned out to be simply the consummation of what we had already discovered with palatable and visible presentness in the love of God, namely his revelation."²⁰

Rosenzweig was typical of the pre-World War I German *Schöngeist* and *Privatgelehrter* of independent means who pursued intellectual and artistic interests without regard to earning a living. Thus, he spent almost ten years as an *ewiger Student*, changing from faculty to faculty. After studying medicine for two years and passing the preliminary medical examinations, he chose to major in philosophy and history, while also taking courses in art, and reading in the extensive style of the pre-World War I European intellectual for whom the concert hall and the theatre were an almost daily diet. After getting his Ph.D., in 1912, he continued his philosophical studies, concentrating mainly on his two-volume *Hegel und der Staat*.

In 1913, he was back at the university, studying law. Later, in the

13. *Hegel und der Staat*.

14. Rosenstock-Huessy, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

15. *The Star*, p. 145.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 390.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 389.

same year, after the profound religious experience of Yom Kippur (Oct. 11, 1913), which made him decide to remain a Jew, he concentrated on Jewish studies, without, however, neglecting his wide philosophical and artistic interests. Thus, in the spring of 1914, when he wrote *Atheistische Theologie*, his first essay on Jewish theology, he also made the discovery that Schelling, and not Hegel, was the author of what he termed *Ein Prolegomenon zur Deutschen Idealistischen Philosophie*. Also, in 1914, he began to study Arabic, and he kept it up throughout the war.²¹

These biographical facts are important because they explain the phenomenal range of topics dealt with in *The Star*. There are sections on Greek and Roman mythology, on Buddhism and Confucianism, on the "Archetypal Word" and the "Symbol." Gilgamesh, "the tragic Hero," is considered side by side with the tragic heroes of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Kant and Hegel, Schleiermacher and Fichte, Goethe and Schiller, Michelangelo and Beethoven, Nietzsche and Rilke, Albrecht Dürer and Meister Eckhardt, Buddha and Confucius, and all the many minds whose contributions to religion, philosophy, literature, the plastic arts and music have shaped civilization were *terra cognita* as well as "home" for Rosenzweig. And all of them agitated him to "response" in the "speech-thinking" of *The Star*. When he asserted that "the 'connoisseur' is as much at home with art as the 'amateur' with music,"²² he really referred to his own relationship to the "Epical," the "Lyrical" and the realm which, "for want of a fixed expression, we wish to designate as 'vision.'"²³ It was probably the encyclopedic range of themes with which he laid the foundation of the theological thesis of *The Star* that made Rosenzweig describe it as a *geistreiches Dilletantenbuch*. He was well aware of the ingenious (*geistreich*) manner of his associations. He was also sufficiently realistic to admit that he was a dilettante in most of the disciplines he dealt with.

The heart-core of *The Star*, however, is Rosenzweig's Jewish philosophy which (and this has not been sufficiently recognized), did not remain at *The Star* level. The Rosenzweig of 1918-19 was far from being the man and the Jew he became in Frankfurt during the years of his association with Nobel and Buber—during the three good years when he was still healthy, and founded and directed the *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus*, and, later, in the seven years of paralysis. It was during his Frankfurt period, and especially during the years of the paralysis, that Rosenzweig transformed himself from a dilettante in *Jüdische Wissenschaft* to a Jewish scholar of depth and substance. In those years of suffering, when the only movement he was capable of was pointing with one finger to the letters of a specially constructed typewriter operated by his wife, he

21. Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*, p. 31.

22. *The Star*, p. 195.

23. *Ibid.*

acquired the mastery of Hebrew with which he translated 92 poems of Yehuda Halevi and, in collaboration with Buber, the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges I and II, Samuel I and II, Kings, and Isaiah. Also, during those years of unspeakable physical suffering and soaring spiritual triumph, Rosenzweig wrote several long essays and reviews, among them the 50-page introduction to Hermann Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften*.²⁴ When Leo Baeck conferred upon him the title of *Moreinu* (our teacher), in 1923, he was fully deserving of it.

It may well be that one of the reasons why *The Star* was not subjected to the "serious analysis" of criticism is that those capable of this criticism knew that when *The Star* was published, in 1921, Rosenzweig had already transcended it—he had moved on to *another* stance, even as a year earlier, when his *Hegel und der Staat*, was published, he was no longer an "Hegelian" but, on the contrary, had become Hegel's fierce critic and opponent.

That he wanted to see these works in print, even though he had already moved on to different positions, was due, he admitted, to his desire for "making himself a reputation," i.e., establishing himself. Rosenzweig was thirty-five when *The Star* was published.

Notwithstanding his emphasis on "Jewish man" as "the man of election" who *is* with God, while the Christian is *on the way*, Rosenzweig's Jewish philosophy is deeply influenced by Christianity. This applies especially to his interpretations of the meaning of Jewish peoplehood, the Hebrew language and the Land of Israel and the Dispersion. When he asserted that the Jewish people "is denied a life in time for the sake of eternity,"²⁵ he paraphrased the Christian thesis that the Jews ceased to be a people with the rise of Christianity and that their role (and punishment) is that of "The Wandering Jew," homeless until the end of time and the Second Coming. However, while Christianity points to the Jews' territorial homelessness as God's punishment, Rosenzweig glorifies it as still another Divine mark of the Election:

To the eternal people, home is never home in the sense of land, as it is to the peoples of the world who plough the land and live and thrive on it, until they have all but forgotten that being a people means something besides being rooted in a land. The eternal people has not been permitted to while away time in any home. . . In the most profound sense possible, this people has a land of its own only in that it has a land it yearns for—a holy land.²⁶

The revival of Hebrew as a spoken language and as the medium of modern literature was in full bloom when Rosenzweig wrote *The Star*. Yet he refers to Hebrew as "the holy language" which "has ceased to be

24. These essays and reviews are collected in Franz Rosenzweig, *Kleinere Schriften* (Berlin, 1937).

25. *The Star*, p. 304.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 300.

the language of daily life." Although "it is not a dead language," it is exclusively "a holy tongue" used for prayer.²⁷ Rosenzweig made much of what he considered still another mark of Jewish Election: the differentiation between what is now generally being referred to as "The Secular City" and the realm of the sacred:

The holiness of the people's own language has an effect similar to that of the holiness of its own land: it does not allow their feelings to be lavished on everyday life. . . So far as his language is concerned, the Jew feels always he is in a foreign land, and knows that the home of his language is in the region of the holy language, a region everyday speech can never invade.²⁸

Rosenzweig was proud that "the eternal people buys its eternity at the cost of its temporal life."²⁹ He regarded Jewish law as another—and most important—factor separating the Jew from "temporal life." Ignoring the innovations of the Talmud, and the Codes and commentaries based on it, he asserted that while the law "can be forsaken, it can never be changed."³⁰ As for the Talmud, *The Star's* only reference to it is in the section, "Islam: The Religion of Intellect,"³¹ which contrasts the Koran, as not being based on a "Bible," with "both Talmud and New Testament" that "certify their divine origin theoretically by means of their connection with the 'Old Testament.'"³² Obviously, when Rosenzweig wrote *The Star* he was not aware of the fact that the Talmud—the Oral Law—is exclusively concerned with legislating for the "temporal life," *the only life* with which the Hebrew Bible is concerned.

Rosenzweig held that the Jewish people is a "blood-community." He proclaimed a mystique of primeval Jewish blood fellowship which is alien to, and irreconcilable with, the basic Jewish teaching that the sincere convert to Judaism is a "son of Abraham" and even superior to the one born into a Jewish family, because the convert has chosen that which was given to the born Jew.

It should be noted that Rosenzweig's emphasis on the Jewish "blood-community" and his assertion that the "natural propagation of the body guarantees eternity,"³³ is inconsistent with his postulation of the "non-temporal" character of the Eternal People. His categorical pronouncements on the exclusiveness of the Jewish "blood-community" are—one hates to say so, but the truth must out—taken straight from Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Race* and the volumes on "racial theory" based on it which proclaim the superiority of "Aryan blood." When Rosenzweig referred to "the Christian's constantly profane flesh

27. *Ibid.*, p. 301 f.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 302.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 303.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 116–118.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

and blood," which teaches him that "he himself is not permitted to anticipate redemption emotionally,"³⁴ he was in opposition to *all and everything* Judaism teaches and holds sacred. It was the poison of Aryan racialism, not Jewish insights, which made Rosenzweig assert that Jewish self-preservation must be assured "through shutting the pure spring of blood off from foreign admixture."³⁵

Rosenzweig was never more wrong than when he wrote that Jews "trusted in blood" and that "only a community based on common blood feels the warrant of eternity warm in its veins even now."³⁶ Perhaps the most potent refutation of this type of non-Jewish racialism is the Jewish belief that the Messiah-to-come will be a descendant of David, whose grandmother, Ruth, was a Moabite. Rosenzweig, on the verge of conversion to Christianity, opted for full Jewish identification. His intemperate sallies against Christianity and his intemperate Jewish chauvinism (both subsided during his Frankfurt years when he became more secure as a Jew) should be seen, as in fact they are, polemical thrusts against Rosenstock-Huessy, who "defeated" him during the all-night "religious disputation" of July 7, 1913, when Rosenzweig admitted that Judaism had run its course and had lost its *raison d'être* and that, consequently, he would become a Christian. But he stipulated that he would *convert as a Jew*. He did become a Jew in the flash of the religious experience of Yom Kippur a few months later. And, inevitably, he now turned on Rosenstock-Huessy with the same missionary passion with which the former, and his distant cousins and close friends, Hans and Rudolf Ehrenberg, had attempted to convert him.

Rosenzweig assigned to Christianity the important role of "the rays" of *The Star* in which Judaism burns as the eternal fire. Yet most of his references to Christianity are instinct with a polemic of chauvinism. To be sure, when provoked and challenged, especially in the enforced Religious Disputations of the Middle Ages, the spokesmen for Judaism did not stop with being defensive but, also, resorted to attack. However, unless there was derogation and offensive provocation, Jews adhered to the principle, "Let all the nations walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever" (Micah 4:5). Rosenzweig, however, felt impelled "to prove" to Rosenstock-Huessy and to the Ehrenbergs, who had converted to Christianity and expected him to do likewise, that *Judaism is superior*, although he granted that, in God's plan, Christianity is equally needed.

It is typical of the true believer that he is convinced of the superiority of "his" truth. Judaism, however, tends to deflate this tendency,

34. *Ibid.*, p. 414.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 341.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

which may easily turn into chauvinistic arrogance. Amos, long ago, placed Judah and Israel on a par with the people of Aram and Tyre, with the Philistines, Edom, Ammon and Moab.

Jews, except when polemics were forced upon them, steered clear of the type of adverse value judgments of other religions which are profuse in *The Star*. The secure person can take pride in his possessions without derogating those of others. Rosenzweig was not yet a secure Jew when he wrote *The Star* and, thus, it contains such statements as "the Christian is by nature, or at least by birth—a pagan; the Jew, however, is a Jew."³⁷ Rosenzweig still did not know that Jewish eternity can be proudly affirmed without casting aspersions on Christianity, such as "whether Christ is more than an idea—no Christian can know. But that Israel is more than an idea, that he knows, that he sees. For we live. We are eternal, not as an idea may be eternal; if we are eternal, it is in full reality."³⁸

Although Rosenzweig "doth protest too much" vis-à-vis Christianity, *The Star's* theology is heavily weighted with Christology, especially in the "Recapitulation" of the meaning of "The Star or The Eternal Truth." Thus, he wrote: "The Eternal had become figure in the truth,"³⁹ which paraphrased the New Testament "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Yet Rosenzweig emphasizes, in recapitulating, that "the whole object of the Third Part, which dealt with the Eternal of the redeemed hypercosmos, was to prove the contrary," namely, that the cosmos is still unredeemed. However:

This eternal life will one day return in the fruit of redemption, as it was once planted. . . . Redemption takes place through the new Adam, free of sin, not fallen, and with him it (redemption) already exists. The miraculous birth of the second Adam renews this creation in the image of God, and man, endowed with soul, here makes it his own and thus becomes heir to redemption, to a redeemedness which is his own from of yore, from creation on and only waits to be claimed by him. Thus it becomes true that, from man's point of view, creation would actually already be redemption.⁴⁰

Patently, the concept of "the new Adam, free of sin, not fallen . . . the second Adam" is thoroughly Christian. Unlike the Jewish Messianic age, which is *this-worldly* and is expected in historical time, Rosenzweig's idea of "Redemption" is cyclically oriented to the Golden Age of the future as the return to the past. The second Adam who is sinless, unlike the first Adam who was "fallen," turns back the clock in the mythological "Eternal Return." Indeed, Jews pray: "Renew our days as of old,"⁴¹ but "the days" referred to are in the *historical* time of Jewish at-homeness in the

37. *Ibid.*, p. 407.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 415.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 418.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Lamentations*, 5:21.

Land before the Dispersion. It is this Jewish rootedness in history which Rosenzweig failed to perceive when he wrote *The Star*, and, therefore, he stated that "only the eternal people is not encompassed by world history."⁴² In his interpretation of Jewish history and its meaning, as well as in his theology generally, Rosenzweig can be shown to be "the captive of Christian thought."⁴³

Last year, on the occasion of the publication of the Hebrew translation of *The Star*,⁴⁴ *Beterem* magazine arranged a colloquium on Rosenzweig.⁴⁵ Joseph Bentwich, *Beterem*'s editor, opened the proceedings with these questions:

To what extent can we Israelis, and especially our youth, benefit from Franz Rosenzweig's teaching? Rosenzweig was not a Zionist—on the contrary, he regarded the Galut as the environment conducive to the fullest expression of Judaism. His involved style makes difficult reading. Yehoshua Amir and Mossad Bialik have worked hard so as to translate and publish this difficult book. What justifies these efforts? And here is a second question: The key-word of *The Star of Redemption* is Revelation, which has various connotations—a) historical revelation, such as the Sinaitic revelation; b) personal religious experience, as delineated by William James in "Varieties of Religious Experience"; c) the experience of God's daily presence which Kadushin terms "Normal Mysticism" and which is provided in Judaism by the *mizvot* and the Jewish way of life. What did Rosenzweig mean by "revelation?" Did he attempt to define it in the manner of James' "religious experience" and is his philosophy based on this type of experience?

Akiba Ernst Simon, one of Rosenzweig's closest friends, admitted that, while Rosenzweig was theoretically an anti-Zionist, he contributed to the *Keren Hayesod*. As Simon remembers him—and as his works attest—Rosenzweig was a man of extremes and contradictions. With respect to his anti-Zionism, Simon recalled that when, shortly before his *aliyah* in 1928, he took leave from Rosenzweig, he told him: "There is only one justification for Zionism—*aliyah*."

Eliezer Schweid has raised questions, or rather objections, to Rosenzweig's interpretation of Islam and Christianity. Simon admitted that Rosenzweig's judgments on Islam were uninformed and that his knowledge of Islam was very limited. With respect to Christianity, Simon stressed that, while Rosenzweig was the first Jewish religious thinker to recognize Judaism and Christianity as equally legitimate roads to God, he did not consider them qualitatively equal—Judaism is superior, because it is *the fire* in the star which Christianity, *the rays*, diffuses.

Rosenzweig's support of the *Keren Hayesod* and his Ben-Gurion

42. *The Star*, p. 335.

43. Dan Clawson, "Rosenzweig on Judaism and Christianity," *JUDAISM*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Winter, 1970), p. 97.

44. *Kokhav Ha-Ge'ulah*, tr. Yehoshua Amir (Mossad Bialik, 1970).

45. *Beterem*, September 1970, p. 16 ff.

kind of definition of Zionism as *aliyah* grew organically from the two words with which *The Star* ends: INTO LIFE. Rosenzweig knew well that “The tree of knowledge is not that of life” (Byron). In his distinctive vocabulary, *Bewehrung*—“verification” is a key-word. Rosenzweig went far beyond the demands of *The Star* in his *Bewehrung* as he took the road INTO LIFE. It is this *Bewehrung*, especially during the seven years when he served God and his people with his broken body and a valiant-triumphant spirit, which illuminated *The Star* with the reflection of Rosenzweig’s charisma.

Rosenzweig’s great contribution—and this was the source of his charisma—was that he taught *Western* Jews the beauty-in-holiness of the Sabbath and the Jewish festivals. I was in my early and middle teens when I attended the *minyán* at Rosenzweig’s home on those Saturdays and Jewish holidays that coincided with school vacations.⁴⁶ Rosenzweig was completely paralyzed and unable to speak. “The nerveless head, which tended to roll from side to side, was supported by a massive iron frame of a sort . . . his neck rested on a cushioned arc, open in front and on top; the front and sides of the neck were fastened with an oblong white-covered cushion to prevent his falling too far forward or sideways.”⁴⁷ But all this did not matter because Rosenzweig’s eyes *spoke of happiness* and there was *a smile on his lips*. And when his little son, Rafael, was carried into the room, while *Kiddush* was being served, the *happiness* that radiated from Rosenzweig’s face was of the kind which is associated with the Presence of the *Shekhinah*. The Rosenzweig of the INTO LIFE years—his life of physical pain and suffering and spiritual elevation and intellectual accomplishment—was not the same man who had written those sections of *The Star of Redemption* which are alien to the spirit of Judaism.

Like most, if not all, classics—and *The Star of Redemption* is in the category of the classics—it is “dated.” It stands as a monument to the German-Jewish *Zeitgeist* of the pre-Weimar and the Weimar years in the same manner that Saadia’s, Maimonides’, Yehuda Halevi’s, Moses Mendelssohn’s and Hermann Cohen’s philosophical-theological works are monuments that enshrine and document their own and their generations’ dialogue-and-controversy with the *Zeitgeist* of their times and their places.

46. In German Gymnasia (High Schools) Saturday was a regular school day, but Jewish students were excused from writing.

47. Nahum N. Glatzer, *Op. cit.*, p. 141.

BRINGING CLARITY INTO THE MYSTICAL

Review-Essay by JACOB B. AGUS*The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality.*

By GERSHOM SCHOLEM. Schocken. New York, 1971. 340 pp. \$15.00.

IN THIS COLLECTION OF ESSAYS, THE AUTHOR presents us with the rich harvest of reflections on the nature of Jewish piety that has grown out of his many years of basic research in the works of Kabbalah. All of us who study and ponder the mystical aspects of the Jewish faith and its role in Jewish history are indebted to him for his pioneering work in introducing a measure of clarity into an area that was previously impervious to the scientific approach. He has brought to his field a unique combination of sympathetic insight, familiarity with the deeper currents of western philosophy, philological competence, scientific objectivity and the rare dedication of a traditional *talmid hakham*. In this book, the author shares with the general public the gems of wisdom that he has mined out of the subterranean tunnels of Jewish literature, and the relevance of his life-long researches to the concerns of our day is demonstrated conclusively. Nor is his style cramped in the least by the obtuseness and intricacy of the subject. The learned reader will be delighted by the many *aperçus* that permeate this work, and even when he remains unconvinced by the author's reasoning, he will be stimulated and amply rewarded.

In the essay which bears the same title as the book, Scholem distinguishes three currents of thought within Judaism—a conservative force—*halakhah*, a restorative version of the messianic hope, and a utopian drive. He argues that traditional messianism, down to the emergence of the *tikkun* doctrine in Lurianic Kabbalah, had no points of contact whatever with the idea of progress. It comprised the belief in a sudden breakthrough of Transcendence, not the assurance of a progressive emergence of an ideal world through the accumulated endeavors and sacrifices of many generations (p. 10), and its hallmark was the vision of Catastrophe (p. 7). He considers “apocalypticism” as an “anarchic breeze” that stirred the hearts of our people in the long, dark night of exile, awakening their desire to break through the shackles of the law as well as the chains of subjection in an unredeemed world. The mythical Torah of the “Tree of Life” held out the hope of ultimate deliverance from the multiple prohibitions of *halakhah*, which derives from the “Tree of Knowledge of good and evil” (p. 21). Maimonides, fearful of the eruption of antinomian trains of thought “consciously and with clear intent aimed at the liquidation of apocalypticism in Jewish Messianism” (p. 25). He aimed to eliminate the “utopian” element in “the hope of Israel” and to stress its “restorative” character. By contrast, the Reform

ideologists of the 19th century downgraded the restorative features of messianism and elaborated its utopian implications, though the Reformers were rationalists and drew their inspiration largely from the Maimonidean formulation of Jewish philosophy.

But for all of its perceptiveness, Scholem's interpretation is not fully convincing, and his emphasis on Catastrophe, as when he writes, "classical Jewish tradition is fond of emphasizing the catastrophic strain in redemption" (p. 38), has been challenged by Prof. Uhrbach who would not deny this strain in the various *midrashim* of redemption, but who also claims that to attribute this conviction to "classical Jewish tradition" is to go beyond the hard evidence, in a realm where the responsible authorities were frequently reticent, as a matter of policy, with "the heart not revealing its intent to the mouth."¹ Also, we may well question whether Maimonides was fearful of the antinomian strain in the messianic hope, especially since the Law was to him of educational, not sacramental utility.²

It would seem more productive to distinguish the components of realism and rational hope from the somber fantasies of riotous irrationalism, rather than to draw the line between restorative and utopian features. Utopianism itself may straddle the border between rational hope and a fevered imagination. Certainly, Maimonides' vision of the messianic era was utopian as well as restorative. However, in his Code, he sought to lower the pitch of imaginative frenzy, not merely to guard against antinomianism, but in order to protect the people from the very real political and psychological dangers posed by self-deluded, would-be Messiahs, like the one in Yemen, or like David Alroy in Persia. At the same time, he brought the messianic hope within the actual vortex of universal history by pointing to the role that both Christianity and Islam played in preparing the way for the Messiah.³ As he saw it, theirs was a positive, realistic role in disseminating the doctrine of the One God and the Biblical philosophy of life to the major part of the human race. Also, by their titanic struggles for the Holy Land, they might create a neutral area, a kind of "eye of the hurricane" where the return of the Jews to their homeland could become a realistic possibility. Here, then, was a vision of progress that the Reform ideologists could well regard as the healthy seed of their own philosophy. Did not Spinoza similarly grant the possibility of the Jews regaining their homeland through the normal processes of history? Spinoza's mere possibility was, to Maimonides, a certainty. While both philosophers believed in the permanence of the laws of nature, the former denied miracles altogether, while the latter regarded certain miracles as having been built into the structure of the

1. E. Uhrbach, *Hazal*, (Jerusalem, 1969), p. 586, note.

2. "Guide of the Perplexed" III, 32.

3. *Hilkhot Melakhim*, X, the uncensored edition.

physical universe. To Maimonides, the universe was one creation and the messianic era was pre-visionsed by the Creator as the ultimate end of the natural development of mankind.⁴

In Scholem's view, Lurianic Kabbalah triumphed in the soul of the Jewish people because it, alone, addressed itself to the agonizing awareness of the homelessness of the hapless Spanish and Portuguese refugees of the 16th century. Their sad experience, far from demonstrating God's unconcern, was actually proof of their central role in the Divine Comedy, for when God is in exile, His people must share the same fate.

Here we have a cosmic picture of *galut*, not of the people of Israel alone, but the *galut* of the *shekinah* at the very inception of its being. All that befalls in the world is only an expression of this primal and fundamental *galut*. All the divine agencies, including as it were, God, subsist in a state of "fallenness." "Such is the state of creation after the breaking of the vessels" (p. 45).

While this notion is already foreshadowed in the Talmudic era, Lurianism placed it in the forefront of Jewish consciousness and deduced from it a theory of redemption. It is the role of the faithful Jews to redeem "the sparks of holiness" that are scattered among the nations. Through the practice of certain mystical rites, *tikkunim*, the cosmic order will be redeemed, in its inward essence, and the "dominion of the husks" (*kelipot*) will be shattered. In this way, the impassioned yearning for redemption could be articulated in specific actions. (We may remark in passing that Abraham Isaac Kook, the late Chief Rabbi of Palestine, based his philosophy of redemption on these concepts of Lurianic Kabbalah.)

A large portion of this volume is concerned, directly and indirectly, with the strange phenomenon of Sabbatai Zevi and the heretical sects that derived from his claims. A word of caution is needed to warn the reader who has only a cursory acquaintance with Jewish sources: one must see the Sabbatian eruption in perspective, as a marginal aberration. True, for a brief moment it lighted up the horizon of Jewish people over a wide area and, when its bright flame was extinguished, burning embers continued to glow in the ashes. But the intellectual leaders of the people, in spite of their anguished situation, quickly regained their equilibrium. We should note, too, that in addition to the "moderate" and the "radical" Sabbatians, described by the author, there were many who maintained a posture of suspended belief, rationalized as follows: Those afflicted with sleeping-sickness have to be awakened from time to time, to be fed, and then returned to dormancy. Even thus, in the wisdom of Providence, the sleep of exile has been interrupted by glimmerings of redemption which have aroused the Jewish people from their lethargy, reinvigorating their spirits and endowing them with the strength to persevere until the coming of the final redemption. In this view, the

4. See Baron's essay on "The Historical Outlook of Maimonides," note 200.

special concern of Providence for the people of Israel is confirmed, rather than belied, by the pseudo-messianic upheavals.

Scholem explains the massive outburst of Sabbatianism as due to "a crisis of tradition," between its conservative, or halakhic, component and the revolutionary impetus that could be triggered by any messianic claimant. That impetus would then be combined with a contingent development of one kind or another and the result would be an antinomian movement. At the time of Paul, the contingent factor was the resistance of many pagans to the rite of circumcision; in the 17th century, it was the peculiar psychology of Sabbatai Zevi which played a decisive role. "In moments of religious exaltation, he tended to commit bizarre acts which violated the law" (p. 60). Such actions were climaxed by his conversion—hence, the notion of "holy sinfulness" among his followers. We may also mention that the feeling of living in a redeemed world required some sort of symbolic demonstration that the aeon of Torah had been succeeded by that of the Messiah.

In the essays collected in this book, Scholem summarizes the views which he has developed in detail in his other works. His remarks on Sabbatai Zevi, in particular, are abstracts of his two-volume study in Hebrew, a work which will soon be available in English. His studies of the Dönme and the Frankists round out his contribution to the understanding of the Sabbatian phenomenon and of the perversion of Lurianic mysticism into destructive nihilism.

The Hasidic movement, founded by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, emerged in the same Polish-Ukrainian provinces of Podolie and Volhyn where the Frankist sect had its largest following. Can it be that the unquenchable longing for messianic redemption, which produced the nihilistic frenzy of Frankism, left the Hasidic movement unaffected? What happened to messianism in the Hasidic world? Did the Baal Shem succeed in transmuting messianic feeling into a passion for personal redemption? Or was the reverse true? Did Hasidism appeal to, and intensify, the longing for redemption, presenting itself to its followers as a way of hastening the advent of the Messiah? Scholem defends the view that the first two generations of Hasidim sought to "neutralize" messianic tension by teaching that "the redemption of the individual must precede that of the Jewish community as a whole." He defends this thesis against Dinur, Tishby and others by assembling a most impressive array of interesting facts. Scholars on both sides point to the famous letter from the Baal Shem to his brother-in-law, in which an interview with the Messiah in heaven is quoted. To the question, "When wilt thou come?" the Messiah replies, "When your fountains (i.e., your instruction) will reach out to all and they will learn to make 'unifications,' as you do. . ." This answer, Scholem points out, postpones the Messiah's coming almost indefinitely. However, in the same vision (the longer version), the Baal

Shem is given a simpler procedure to effect *devekut* than those used by the Kabbalists. It may be argued that the Baal Shem's immense popularity in his own lifetime led him to feel that his followers would, indeed, succeed in bringing the Messiah within a relatively short time.

Paradoxical as it may appear, I hold that Scholem and Dinur are both right—messianic expectation was heightened in Hasidism, but also neutralized, or better, diverted “into a program of action.” In the person of the *Zaddik*, the potency of the messianic era could be experienced in the present, unredeemed world.

The *Zaddik* was believed to be a bearer of the Holy Spirit, and the outpouring of that Holy Spirit was generally taken as a sign of the approach of the messianic era. By his intimate association with the *Zaddik*, the Hasid could feel that he was on the threshold of the messianic Era. Scholem points to the many points of contact between the Sabbatian-Frankists and the Hasidim. He refers particularly to the need of the *Zaddik* “to fall down from his high levels” and to his power to redeem “the strange thoughts” of his followers. He also points out the idea of ranking story-telling about the *Zaddik* as a high mode of divine service, akin to the mystery of the *merkavah* (Chariot). We may note in this connection that the practices of traveling to the “court” of the *Zaddik*, dancing together and employing violent gestures in prayer, were common to both the Frankists and the Hasidim.

That the *Zaddik* was a representative of the redeemed world, hence at least a precursor of the Messiah, is explained in the *Tanya*, the classic work of Rav Shneur Zalman, who was noted for his zeal in attempting to curb the extravagant forms of *Zaddik*-worship. The “Rav” is concerned to prove that “the average person” also has a role to play in the redemption of the world, and defines an “average person” as one who is perpetually engaged in suppressing the Evil Desire. By contrast, the *Zaddik* has already succeeded in completely transmuting the Evil Desire into sheer holiness. The “strange thoughts” that occasionally assail him are those of his followers, while he himself belongs to the redeemed world. He is a herald, here and now, of the consummation that the Messiah will bring about in due time.

Scholem bears in mind the contrast with the Sabbatian-Frankist sect, when he writes that “the Hasidim laid great stress on the teaching that human activity is not able to really bring about or reveal the messianic world” (p. 244). But, as it stands, the statement is misleading, since the central goal of the Besht, as revealed in the previously mentioned letter, was to hasten the coming of the Messiah, “to uplift the Shekhinah from the dust.”

The chapter dealing with the nuclear experience of Hasidism—the attainment of *devekut*, or adherence—is a masterful attempt to discover the dynamic essence of the movement. What is it that Hasidism added to

Lurianic Kabbalah, transforming that esoteric body of doctrine and practice into a powerful, mass-movement? The Hasidim generally explained that, while Luria revealed the divinity up in heaven, the Baal Shem Tov manifested its Presence here on earth—that is, the Hasidim were shown how “to serve God in all ways” and, therefore, to sense His Presence even in profane activities. Scholem puts it differently—namely, while for the Kabbalists, the attainment of *devekut* was the climax to a long and arduous quest, to the Hasidim, *devekut* was the beginning of the road of piety. Hence, it could be only a radical orientation of feeling, not a conceptual attainment.

We may add, in this connection, that Buber’s contention regarding the exaltation of the role of the common man and of simple piety is justified, not only by folk-legends, but by the central orientation of the movement. If Hasidism focused attention on what happens within man, rather than in the *sefirotic* realm, it laid the groundwork for a fresh outburst of genuine religious feeling, a treasure that common people are likely to possess in greater abundance than the class of Talmud-scholars. Scholem, in his critique of Buber, appears to ignore the followers of Rabbi Abraham Kalisker, who provoked the ire of the Gaon of Vilna, and the social upheaval which the Hasidic movement generated, particularly in the period to which he refers, 1736–1815.

The essay on Hasidic piety is replete with penetrating observations. The author regards *devekut* as communion, involving an active role on the part of God, as well as of man. Such a state of religious ecstasy was the goal of the Safed school of Kabbalists. So it is described in the following quotation from a famous moralistic work.

And he will not be quickly separated from the holiness of his love, for the King holds him with the bonds of love. So he grows in holiness more and more. It is as if one throws a rope to his friend to pull him closer to oneself, and this friend reciprocates by similarly throwing back a rope so that they are quickly bound together in one knot, strong and tight, without any separation between them at all.⁵

But, it is my opinion that in Hasidic literature one cannot always assume the mystical denotation of *devekut* precisely because, as Scholem points out, the concept was popularized and, also, necessarily, vulgarized. Is it not better to retain the literal translation of *devekut* as “adherence,” which reflects only man’s initiative, his clinging to the Divine Being with might and main? Once *devekut* is translated as communion, it is natural to go further and to write as the author does. “He does not change the basic meaning of *devekut* as a value of introspection which consists of solitary intercourse with God” (p. 217). Here the distortion is more obvious.

The greatest interpreter of Hasidism to the intellectual community of our time was the late Martin Buber, whose two-volume work, “Tales

5. Elijah De Vidash, “Shaar Ahavah,” in *Reshit Hakhmah*.

of the Hasidim" is a remarkable collection of striking anecdotes and beautiful maxims. In a number of essays, Martin Buber interpreted the essence of Hasidism as the endeavor to meet God through one's direct response to people and to the immediate challenges of the day, ignoring the Kabbalistic and generally dogmatic context of Hasidic life. It can fairly be stated that Buber created a new genre of religious thought, which, for want of a better word, might be called Neo-Hasidism.

Since the scholarly world has come increasingly to identify this Buberian, artistic creation with the actual, historical movement, Scholem deems it necessary to point out that Buber abstracted from the historical reality in accordance with his own philosophy. Firstly, Buber employs the legends and anecdotes of the movement, rather than its serious literature, and, secondly, he ignores the texture of belief and ritual, within which the Hasidim lived.

"Buber combines facts and quotations to suit his purpose, namely, to present Hasidism as a spiritual phenomenon and not as a historical one. He has often said that he is not interested in history" (p. 230). Scholem proceeds to document this charge. More specifically, he distinguishes between the Zaddik's "gathering of the Holy Sparks" in things and the Buberian encounter of God through concrete actions—in the former, the thing itself is denied any worth, only its "root" in the Divine is affirmed; in the latter case, the concrete act is the meeting place of the human and the divine. Much more could be said along similar lines. But once we become aware of the distinction between Buber's neo-Hasidism and the historical Hasidic movement, we can appreciate the artistic and intellectual achievements of Buber without quibbling about their historicity. Furthermore, the Buberian achievement must be seen in the light of a century of similar endeavors by less talented poets, journalists and nameless story-tellers. The very nature of the Hasidic world favored such a process of continuous reinterpretation, since it was defined by the emergence of living communities rather than by a fixed ideology.

Scholem describes Buber as a "religious anarchist" (p. 248). This phrase is far too crude to convey an accurate grasp of Buber's view that the sacred action is the one which a person performs spontaneously, once he has achieved unity (*einheit*) in his own personality and has directed his whole being toward "the eternal Thou." Anarchy suggests a total absence of values, whereas, in the "I-it" world Buber recognizes the validity of general laws. In the "I-Thou" relation, Buber feels that man should be free to transcend the limitations of ethical principles, rising to the higher plane of direct confrontation. We may doubt the wisdom of Buber's counsel, but we must acknowledge that it is not sheer arbitrariness. Scholem's meaning would be better conveyed by the term "religious utopianism."

I cannot close this review without calling attention to the fascinating chapter on The Star of David. With immense erudition, the author disputes the long-held opinion that the six-pointed star referred to the combination of *Sefirot*, called *Ze-er Anpin* or *Vav Kezavot* in Lurianic Kabbalah. He outlines in detail its occurrence in magical amulets and its association with one of the 70 names of *Metatron*. Only by degrees did the six-pointed star come to symbolize the Jewish religion, though as a symbol it never acquired the rank of the cross in Christianity. Not even the Menorah possesses this rank, perhaps only the actual Scroll of the Law is charged with similar potency. Nevertheless, when, in 1649, the Jews of Prague were given the privilege of displaying a flag they chose the hexagram. In 1656, the boundary stone between the Jewish and Christian sections of Vienna was marked by a cross and a star of David. This symbol was associated with the messianic hope in the 18th century, when it was particularly favored by Sabbatians. In the 19th century, "The Shield of David served as the empty symbol of a Judaism which itself was falling into meaninglessness" (p. 280). These are harsh words, if taken literally. The author's meaning is, presumably, that the symbol was no longer "charged" with mystical potency. But then the Zionist flag emblazoned the star on the blue-white flag, and, *lehavdil*, Hitler employed it on the yellow badge. Those two events were certainly sufficient to endow the ancient symbol with fresh meaning.

This volume is, as a whole, a veritable treasure-house of deep learning that is exceedingly relevant to our contemporary concerns. Moreover, it demonstrates the vitality of Jewish scholarship at this crucial moment in our history. Scholem combines an antiquarian's love of minute details with a remarkable sensitivity to the babel of voices in the suddenly expanded world of our day. As he points out in the essay, "The Science of Judaism—Then and Now," Jewish scholarship was characterized at its inception by "a twilight quality" (p. 305). Moritz Steinschneider could well speak of its task as being that of giving Jewish history "a decent burial" (p. 307). In a more serious vein, its motto might well have been Hegel's famous remark—"It is at dusk that the owl of Minerva spreads out its wings." We are now standing at the dawn of a new age, a dawn of new life in a Jewish state and in the free world, particularly in America. In the future as in the past, Jewish life is inconceivable without the arduous struggle for self-understanding, in a context that has grown as wide as the total experience of humanity. Shall we prove worthy of the challenge of this hour? We cannot take refuge in romantic faith. Yet, we face an unprecedented prospect for Jewish scholarship—to show how, where and when the insights of the past are relevant to the universal, as well as the specifically Jewish, concerns of our time.

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A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought

Published Quarterly by the
RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA

220 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10003

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